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WIDENER



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A. RUSSO-JAPANESE
WAR POEM.

BY JANE H. OAKLEY.

1352

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A RUSSO-JAPANESE
WAR POEM.

BY JANE H. OAKLEY.

BRIGHTON.
THE STANDARD PRESS.
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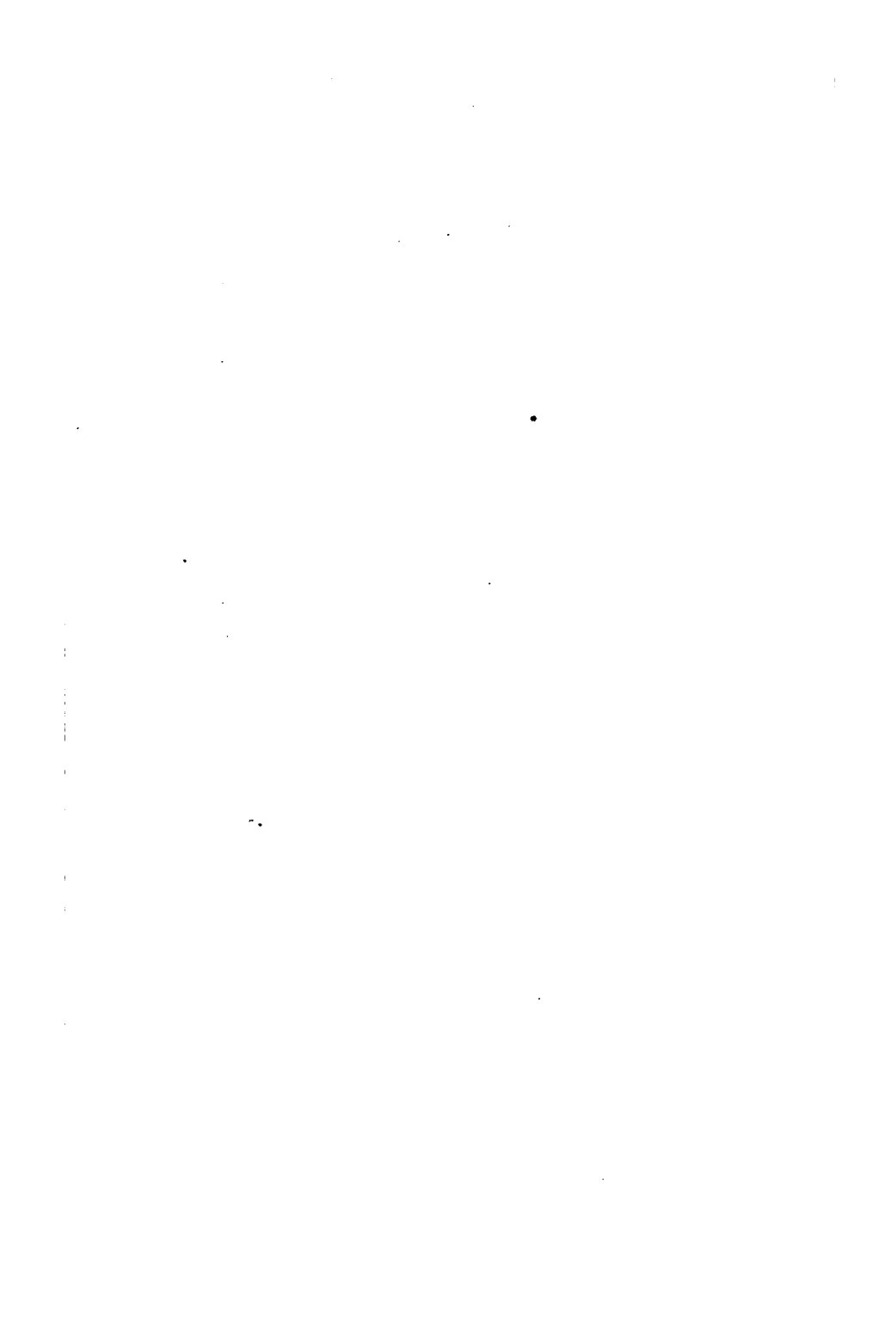
I wish to acknowledge my sense of indebtedness for facts, opinions, and even occasional expressions, to Rear-Admiral Ingles (late Naval Instructor to Japan), to the Military Correspondent of the "Daily Telegraph," Mr Bennett Burleigh, and other War Correspondents ; and to the very able writers of articles upon the Russo-Japanese War in the "Daily Telegraph" and "Globe."

J. H. O.

To My Cousin,
SIR HENRY A. LAURIE, BART.,
Of Maxwellton (great grandson of Captain Pilfold,
who commanded the "Ajax" at Trafalgar), as a
mark of affectionate esteem.



A RUSSO-JAPANESE
WAR POEM.



THE RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR.

•1ST CANTO.

The die is cast, the East is now aflame !
Colossal Russia fights her gallant Foe
Japan—styled “England fair of Eastern Seas.”
No Seer can tell which Realm may be laid low.
This deadly conflict’s issues are so vast,
For Nations’ landmarks will undoubted change ;
Its power may e’en be felt throughout all time,
The turn of Eastern thought have wider range.
Japan hath shown a courteous patience great,
Her just demands met no responsive view ;
At length the olive branch hath been withdrawn ;
Arbitrament of Arms, is fact, in lieu.
Alas ! before the sword be sheath’d once more,
A mighty struggle will indeed take place ;
Historic page *none greater* will record,
A life and death encounter foes must face.
New lines on maps, on “issue,” will be drawn ;
The scales of power must new adjusted stand,
An epoch fresh for Asiatic rule.
The views on “Race” must broadly too expand.
*Japan’s last message gave her *least demands*,
Then Russia, obstinate, sought more delay,

* The *Minimus*.

War preparations vast to full complete ;
 No *Peace Solution* urged her irksome way.
 One thing alone was needed by Japan,
 And *that* was "action," trenchant, swift and strong.
 Her course was foreordain'd, as she was check'd
 By undue waiting on her Foe so long.
 For weal, or woe, if Dai Nippon must strike,
 Then *she* must strike at once with right arm's force,
 With patriotic passion's fervour true,
 A concentrated blow with full resource.

JAPAN'S VICTORY—2ND CANTO.

This *great* event, dramatic at all points,
 Hath taken place, in twice twelve hours' short space,
 The Naval power of Russia hath succumb'd
 To brilliant tactics shown by Eastern race.
 The war's "first shot" was fired at Chemulpo.
 By Russian Gunboat Korietz : no ship
 Was placed to watch approach of Nippon Fleet,
 With troops to land, Corean Shore to grip.
 Gun-boat was leaving Harbour, but return'd ;
 †The Russian Cruiser Variag was there ;
 'Neath threat of swift attack, both put to sea ;
 By Squadron then engaged with sad ill-fare.
 A brilliant, daring, most successful blow,
 Japan then dealt, the very self-same night ;
 Port Arthur Russian Naval centre great
 Attack'd in darkness, save for Harbour's light.

† On Corean Southern extremity.

Three Russian boats—Torpedo—sea patroll'd ;
Erratic searchlights were from *one* ship thrown ;
The Russian sailors sang their evening hymn ;
Around deep silence fell, no danger shown.
Soon deadly missiles sped, exploding loud,
With direful shock all vessels throb'd convulsed ;
The Tsar's three finest ships Japan had struck,
Torpedoed true ; by Foes were not repulsed.
In *Outer Harbour* lay the Russian Fleet ;
The finer ships in four straight lines were moor'd
(In Inner Waters ice had form'd in blocks—
Restricted movements could not be endured.)
The Japanese Torpedo-boats got in
Port Arthur's *Outer Harbour* late at night,
And were not fired upon *at first* as Foes,
As they were using *Russia's own Flash-light*.
The Pallada was on the outer edge
Of Russian Fleet ; her Chief had quickly seen
Torpedo-boats approach, with lights full on ;
'Tis said, prepared for action she had been.
Mikado's Battleships appear'd next day,
And there and then engaged the Russian Fleet,
Which had four ships put out of action soon ;
Japan's skill'd gunners did good work repeat.
The fine ship Pallada with Cruisers three,
In battle off Port Arthur, were all struck
Upon the water-line, disabled quite ;
Thus Russian Squadron met with great ill-luck.
‡ Japan hath seized Mezampo on the coast,

‡ Both cruiser and gunboat were captured by the Japanese Squadron, with 600 of their crew.

And may establish *there* a Naval base ;
And fortify with speed this great stronghold,
Commanding Southern Straits, with long sea face.

3rd CANTO.

Momentous episodes in Naval war
Have been discerned in space of one short week ;
The *cause* of Russia's overwhelming loss
True experts *now* with zealous care should seek.
Japan shows ever aptitude for war ;
She casts a silence great on all her plans,
Quite secret in her moves o'er sea, or land
And strikes a *sudden* blow, which ardour fans.
The Island Empire seizes, one by one.
All points strategic on Korean Strand,
Chemulpo doth the Capital o'erawe,
Mezampo *south*, and Gensan *east*, both stand.
The latter Harbour, *sole*, on Eastern Coast,
Is only spot where Russia could descend
From Vladivostock—Golden Horn so near—
Where Fleet and Yalu Force might both impend.
Upon Administrative System Russ
At Petersburg, a strong searchlight is thrown,
On cloud in which the hapless Tsar is wrapp'd ;
And grave ineptitude is clearly shown.
Through whirl of stern events, in recent days,
A most pathetic figure stands the Tsar,
Surrounded by a system *obsolete*
As time of Peter Great, removed so far.
No lesser brain than that of Bonaparte

Machine of autocratic Russ could guide,
To meet arm'd strife in *modern guise*, prepared
At every point, when war cloud doth betide,
Without regard to conflict now in hand ;
For Hague's all worthy Conference of Peace
The World owes debt of gratitude to Tsar
To solve disputes, and needless wars decrease.
Diplomacy of Russia now hath reach'd
In truth, the furthest point ; from first to last,
By arrogance like that of China ruled,
Which inability on problems cast.
Upon this system Nemesis now falls ;
At stake, a hundred million people's fate ;
In hands, now proved *incompetent*, is placed
The very destiny of Russian State.
Disdainful view of clever Japanese
Is "Tragedy of Errors" true main-spring ;
"Mere monkeys, having only brain of birds,"
Is strange, ill-judged remark the Russians fling.
The Admiral Alexeieff, takes o'er
Supreme command of Russian Eastern Force
By sea, and land ; *the man who made the war*
Will now conduct it through its bitter course.
The Autocrat of all the Russias vast
Is placed on pinnacle of dizzy height,
Which Fatalists, and ill-advisers reach,
Opposing modern stream of vivid light.
Japan's rare Fighting Admiral so famed§
Hath sent Dispatch full modest, brief, concise,
Reports "From Sea," that soon his Fleet combined

§ Admiral Togo trained on H.M. Ship Worcester.

Enforced the plans of prearranged device.
"My Squadron, having left Home Waters swift,
Attack'd the Russian Squadron off the Bay,
Four vessels by Torpedoes being struck ;
Again, my Fleet, in force, advanced next day ;
For forty minutes then engaged the Foe
In offing near Port Arthur Bay, *at noon* ;
Foes stopp'd the fight at *one*, to enter Bay,
And thus appear'd demoralised o'er soon.
My officers were cool while in command,
Their conduct not unlike that oft display'd
In our manœuvres practised far and near ;
With hearty zeal instructions they obey'd."
The point to hold now steady in one's mind,
Is, that Japan the Ocean Mistress stands, †
And she can strike a blow where'er she lists,
To conquer Foes, and gain Corean lands.

4th CANTO.—FEBRUARY 20, 1904.

On Naval conflicts now in Eastern Seas,
And varied armaments, most minds are bent ;
Our Japanese Allies in practice show
The wide-spread influence Sea-power hath lent.
To Woosung-Bar Mikado's Cruiser starts
To sweep the Ocean round, and vantage show ;
At Shanghai Port a Russian Gun-boat lurks ;
"A straw will show which way the wind doth blow."
King Edward, with unvaried insight keen,
Hath probed our Nation's wish with judgment true,

† Of Far Eastern waters.

Without a moment's pause hath visit paid
To England's stronghold, "submarines" to view,
*When Captain Percy Scott, of skill renown'd,
Some *marvellous inventions* show'd the King,
Manipulations made of metall'd mass,
With ease as fowling-piece—precise in swing.
Sea-power to Island Kingdom, like our own,
Is vital question, all transcendent now,
When Naval theories must surely change,
For bravest ships to grim "Destroyers" bow.
Japan's fine modern "Fighting Fleet" stands thus :—
Six battle-ships, six armour'd cruisers too,
Design'd, and built by British hands and brains,
†With first "Box'd-battery" used in system new.
For years, before the present war began,
Japan's fine Fleet oft cruised in waters far,
Her neighbours' "Outposts" were its frequent goal,
Each Bay and Islet proved a beacon star.
Magnificent are Harbours Japanese,
And shelter'd nooks around Corean Coast ;
Torpedo Craft can there manœuvre well,
Alone, or join'd with battle-ships—a host.
In days like these of great mechanic skill,
Comparing modern war with deeds of old
Is far too hard a task ; Japan unhelp'd
Attack'd Colossal Power with courage bold ;
Like British sailors' glorious, daring feats
In Great Eliza's time, with all at stake,

* The Head of Gunnery School.

† Adopted since by the British Navy, as superior
to casemate.

‡ When Drake attack'd the mighty King of Spain,
And vanquish'd him for Queen and Country's sake.
Japan's Destroyer Squadron still at sea
Port Arthur reach'd one dark and stormy night,
The snow fell pitiless, with cold intense,
The coast-line hid, till seen blurr'd Harbour light.
'Tis difficult to think of such a cruise,
A strange blind run through unknown dangers great,
Destroyers slowing down to creep 'neath coast,
And then full speed ahead to meet their fate.
A Russian Ship's sharp outlines now appear,
Quick Order, "Hard a Port, Torpedo fire,"
With glance behind to see how blow hath sped,
With lightning speed from Harbour did retire,
Amid a perfect hailstorm wildly fired
From rifles, pompoms, shrapnel shell in shower,
The game most perilous, the risk extreme,
A modern "Hope Forlorn" in style and power.
The Cruiser sunk in daring bold attack
Was "Boyarín," the fastest Russian Scout ;
Port Arthur holds no single battle-ship
That could engage the Foe, and put to rout.
|| Rear-Admiral Ingles says, in clever notes,
" 'Tis not the weapon, but 'tis man that counts,
In Naval warfare seen to-day." The Fleet
Of Russ Destroyers up to thirty mounts,
Far larger ships, more seaworthy than "boats,"
Of which a great Flotilla Russia holds ;
Japan owns twenty fine Destroyers now,

‡ With Hawkins and Frobisher.

|| Late Naval Adviser to Japan.

While sixty boats her splendid Fleet enfolds.
'Till now, it was supposed, Torpedo Craft
Defensive purpose held, *one thing could do*,
Could help protect a Port against attack
Of Foes, with battle-ships in force or few.
The Russian sailors were for prowess famed,
And hardihood, in sailing ships of yore ;
Mechanic skill they seem inapt to grasp ;
The Japanese excel in science more.
Japan's Mikado, "Mutso Hito" named,
Belongs to oldest dynasty of Kings
Throughout the world ; the Founder's reign
To times of "Bel" the Babylonian, brings.
Japan's wise Monarch hath in four decades
The modern science learnt of Western lands ;
Let prayer ascend, that *he*, in God's own time,
Through faith, § may rest in His Almighty hands,

5TH CANTO.

The first dramatic Naval chapter ends,
Port Arthur's Entrance now is partly seal'd ;
Japan is Mistress too of Yellow Sea ;
In other waters near her power can wield.
Some five stone-laden steamers, old and worn,
Like brand new ships of war were painted bright,
And fill'd by Japanese with missiles grim,
Exploding, look'd like ships of fire, by night.
To block Port Arthur's Entrance they essay'd,
In sinking effort proved successful quite ;

§ Christian Faith.

Their officers and men returning safe,
Who this heroic deed perform'd in fight.
Through panic Russian gunners' lost their nerve,
And fired on "Neutral" ships in Harbour moor'd ;
In dire confusion *these* alone were saved,
By *inefficient marksmen* well assured.
The Japanese report that fireships two
Through Outer Harbour's Entrance rush'd, got near
To Warship Retvizan, *which sank*, their crews,
Ignited fuse, and then dropp'd off in rear.
The Russians made good use of searchlights then,
The heavy fire of guns sustain'd so well,
That fugitives swam round the edge of coast,
And could not reach their boats for hours' long spell.
At dawn of day the sea rose mountains high ;
The wind to force of hurricane attained ;
The hardships borne by officers and men
Beyond all parallel, till Fleet they gain'd.
Japan's great "Fighting Admiral" reports,
"To *man* stone-laden hulks, for Volunteers
I call'd, two thousand men responding quick ;
For daring enterprise they held no fears.
The men without facilities to write,
Then *cut themselves*, on board torpedo-boats,
To sign their names in blood, so zealous were
To do, and dare, on any craft that floats."
In character a revelation great,
Resembling ancient Grecian Heroes true ;
These men in thousands sought a "Hope Forlorn,"
Thought post of danger post of honour too.
In Nation Japanese a striking fact

Is *this*, all ranks this feeling doth pervade,
To very lowest grade of seamen down,
For "Throne" each man will give his *life* and aid.
*The only country in the world, where men
Ne'er recognise their *rights*, but *duties* sole,
No hope of decoration, or reward,
To face grim death they leap in duty's role.
This patriotic spirit too is seen
In sister Service full as great ; for breach
Of discipline the men are punish'd most
By *being left behind* ;—these threats all reach.†

In day-light's fine exchange of shots, 'tis said,
The Commissariat Stores were shell'd in part,
Coal-heaps were set on fire, and work in new
Repairing Docks, impeding Russian start.
The lights on Foemen's Scouts were seen from Port ;
Although a gloomy, cold, and boisterous night,
A Fleet of fifteen ships was cruising near,
Prepared for battle at the dawn of light.
Three gallant cruisers, with Torpedo craft,
From Harbour issued forth to meet the Foe,
One boat was sunk, two Cruisers damaged sore
Return'd to Port, they could no further go.
Port Arthur, Vladivostock too, both lie
In dire distress,—one hears astounding tales—
Quite unprepared for any kind of siege,
Both lack provisions ; famine-price prevails.

*See comments by Rear-Admiral Ingles.

†Soldiers consider this punishment so disgraceful
that no faults are committed in consequence.

Surrounding country's barren, frozen out ;
A few wild deer are sometimes caught and sold ;
‡Their weight in silver fetch—so much the pound—
No change can come, while lasts severe the cold.
The Japanese were aye a fighting race,
Most daring Pirates in all waters round,
In days of yore were Eastern Vikings bold,
The Chinese Coast their favour'd raiding ground.
Till saintlike Emperor for wisdom famed,
An end to state of turbulence did make ;
They soon became a race of fishermen;
But fought each other *then*, for fighting's sake.

6TH CANTO.

The veil of silence now hath been withdrawn,
On land the tragic drama will be play'd,
Opposing forces reach appointed goals ;
Exchange of shot by Outposts hath been made.
The greatest Military power on Earth
The Japanese attack with fiery zest,
So they must use all weapons they command ;
Till plans are ripe, they think deep silence best.
Indeed 'tis great strategical design,
To carry on a war behind a veil,
The Island Empire isolated lies
From all the world cut off, in coat of mail.
In North Corea, Strategists now say
The first dread crash of arms will soon take place,
When Sol's warm kiss doth melt the ice-bound land ;
‡Three hundred roubles per pound.

A Camp in "Arctic Cold" few troops can face.
The frost at *eighty-two* degrees was seen
At Lake Baikal, and snow-clad wastes around,
Where Russian soldiers died through piercing cold,
And numbers great frost-bitten too were found ;
Siberian Railway now hath been attacked
By hordes of Chunchuses, who forward trend,
For Cossacks' cruel conduct seek revenge ;
Grave Russian troubles never seem to end !
As in South Afric, during Boer War,
The Block-House plan, on parts of Line, prevails ;
And time alone will prove, with Bandits near,
If splendid system works for good, or fails.
† Japan's fine Seamen bold resemble much
Britannia's far-famed type, in wish to please,
In garb, in gait, in frank and manly style,
In time of danger, or in hours of ease.
They choose oft gentle occupations too ;
In wool-work British sailors pleasure take,
The patterns choice, of rich and rare design ;
Oft paper flowers the Japanese will make.
In piping times of Peace, Nippon's brave men
Are merry fellows while on board ; they take
Deep interest, too, in all they have in hand,
And " festive scenes " their special pastime make,
'Tween Decks they lay out gardens with great skill,
Most charming, while artistic in design ;
With sandy paths, transpersed with flowering beds,
Chrysanthemum, camelia, almond fine.
And then again they love a " Warlike Play,"

† See clever notes by Rear-Admiral Ingles.

In armour dress'd, as "Samuri" of old,
Who fought with double swords, and bristled face,
To strike with terror Foes, less fierce and bold.
When off a Cruise they stroll to favour'd haunts,
To tea-house, greeting host, and tea-girl band,—
In truth *refinement* rests with our Allies—
With merry laugh on shore, walk hand in hand.
Port Arthur's Forts received a feigned attack,
By "Phantom Fleet," in darkest hours of night ;
A heavy fire from sea was well sustained
In line, the vessels showing each a light,
These glowing, dancing specks, on waters dark,
Awoke the Garrison to frenzied life,
Who fired at random on all objects seen,
Much ammunition spent in fancied strife.
These lights were lamps attach'd to lumber rafts,
Sent out by Japanese from Light-House near,
In charge of two Torpedo boats, which tow'd
To zone of fire, and then retired to rear.
When lights were spied by Garrison, they seem'd
Like line of battleships some miles away,
The Russians fired o'er head, Torpedo craft
Advancing swift, grim order to obey.
The Japanese would feel intense delight,
That Russians should believe in *clever ruse*,
They thought a grand attack was in full swing,
So Gunners deadly missiles then let loose.
Japan's resources large and wondrous seem ;
All ships are quick repair'd, good work and fine,
Supply of labour skill'd is always sure,
Unless there's damage great 'neath water line.

Nippon's fine heavy battleships are now
In North-East waters near to Poisset Bay ;
To strongest Russian Port, Siberian Coast,
To Vladivostock, will attention pay.
The news comes in, a squadron fine appear'd
Off Port, when heavy cannonade began,
Two hundred shells some trifling damage wrought ;
Then warships back to Isle of Askold ran.
This fleet in splendid line of battle form'd,
Off Sobol, opposite Patroclus Bay ;
The ships then open'd fire with all their guns,
Outside the range of Forts, five miles away.

7TH CANTO.

*A Merchant left Port Arthur in a Junk ;
He gives a thrilling story of attack,—
“ The fierce bombardment by Japan's fine fleet
Defenders' nerve destroy'd by constant rack.
Four ships in line would pass five miles away,
And fire all guns, outside of range of Fort ;
Between four more was interval of space,
Two hundred shells thus thrown, *each day*, in Port.
As soon as damage wrought by shell was seen,
Chinese, 'neath dread of lash, with Guard was sent,
To make good all defects with utmost speed,
Chastised, if they on work were not intent.
†A grave affair is “ war ” in every sense ;
One notes with interest keen, the skilful way

* A neutral Chinese Merchant.

† See Rear-Admiral Ingles.

The Japanese prepare for trial great,
Before they sail in contest smart and gay.
The crews of several warships, that belonged
To standing Squadron at Port Saseho moor'd,
Began a climb of mountain steep, in rear,
Two thousand feet above the sea assured.
At nine, Blue-jackets had assembl'd all,
And then began ascent, at *running pace*,
In two divisions led by two sub-Chiefs ;
Without the least fatigue, all ran the race.
In just two hours from start the summit gain'd :
And then a second time ascent was made ;
Five Champions had been pick'd from all the crews;
When handsome prize their efforts well repaid.
The Sister Service not a whit behind,
Whose Infantry are thought abroad, and here,
The swiftest marching Troops throughout the world,
Score sixty miles a day, it doth appear.
Their power and stay, through marches long sustain'd,
May surely compensate in measure great
For lack of cavalry—their weakest arm—
With “trot” they start, which pace they ne'er abate.
Their great mobility, through longest march,
In China's Boxer War was marvel seen ;
In European Troops, Columbian too,
Amazement caused, indeed, quite startling, keen.
‡ When Officers proceed to billet Troops,
They read with care the orders they decree,
“That men must treat each class with high respect,”
This rule is carried out in full degree.

‡ Japanese Officers.

Throughout Corea people are impress'd
By order good the Japanese maintain ;
With payments punctual for all supplies ;
This course in time full confidence must gain.
By reign of terror Russia seeks to rule,
In Province new by "lash" doth Peasants hold ;
Her Officers a bad example set ;
Atrocious conduct charged to Cossacks bold.
Un-Holy Russia hath already gone
In gross ill treatment quite to fullest length ;
For "Blagovestschensk" stands out clear defined,
The *foulest blot* on great misgovern'd strength.
This thriving Town contain'd ten thousand souls ;
She thrust these helpless people into boats,
Which founder'd soon amid deep rushing stream,
Alas ! but ruin now the site denotes !
The old and young were slain, sweet maidens fair,
And loving wives with tender babes so wee,
Who cast their treasures on the bank, to save,
Which Cossacks spear'd, and held aloft in glee.

No movement, well assured, on land is known,
The cloud of mystery is still in force ;
The Japanese still hold tenacious grip
On frowning Fortress,—doom'd in time's due course.
Bombardment furious once more took place,
Four hundred shells exploding in the Fort,
By irony of fate, proved "Russian shells,"
From vessel captured on the way to Port.
This grand attack upon the stronghold famed
From midnight lasted until late next day,

The Town, the Forts, the Arsenal, the Docks,
 Were damaged sore, and train on line of way.
 The fleet a most determin'd action wrought ;
 High-angle fire, which rain'd a shower of flame
 Amid this Fortress death-trap, hill-enclosed,
 From Battle-ships, whose men had five-mile aim.
 Two Cruisers placed at angles right, to view
 §The range, there, "wireless" hints to gunners gave,
 Whose aim became more deadly in results ;
 ||Defenders scarce replied, *big shot to save*.
 ¶In Navy circles change of views appear,
 Since Japanese *skilled* Officers took part
 In fierce bombardment long of Fortress great,
 Wherein each inch of ground they knew by heart.

8TH CANTO.

The Russ Destroyer Scori struck a mine
 Unplaced, while near Port Arthur's entrance barr'd,
 Like Dalny's ship it was to atoms blown ;
 Few men were saved in vessels so ill-starr'd.
 *Japan's torpedo craft may owe success
 To fine large Depot-ship they have in tow,
 This hovers in the lee of Island group
 Near Fleet, thus ready succour can bestow.
 A ship of twelve knot speed, she carries too
 One heavy gun, three pounders—six—beside,
 To ward off fierce attack, and, firm repel

§ Marconi's System Install'd.

|| From dearth of ammunition.

¶ Re attack of Forts by Battleships.

*See Rear-Admiral Ingles, in "Daily Telegraph."

Mosquito craft, or whatso'er betide.
The Japanese invented first this boat
Which holds within the gear, the stores required
By all Torpedo craft, in warfare known,
Mines, cables, boats, and batteries, aye desired.
The use of Depot-ship for all repairs
Hath often saved six hundred mile-long cruise
To "Sascho's" splendid Dockyard, far removed,
In time most precious, none whate'er to lose.
The British Navy lesson now hath learnt;
A "mother-ship" is added new to Force;
To each Torpedo Fleet a fine adjunct
Will be in all Home Ports—in time's due course.
†An Officer a vivid picture gives,
Commanding battery on "Electric Height";
High-angle fire destruction seems to pour;
And nervous strain attends these shells in flight.
"Upon a clear and sunny day, now past,
A gentle swell upon the ocean's breast,
On dim horizon tiny speck was seen,
Another follow'd, then loomed forth the rest;
And nearer, ever nearer, on they came,
'Till Fleet of fifteen ships appear'd in view,
But six miles off, now steaming swiftest pace,
And larger, ever larger, still they grew.
And then, the smallest puff of smoke was seen,
And all in battery wonder'd where the shell
Would fall, as we stood watching, waiting by;
Some eighty yards away from Cliff it fell,

†A private letter from a wounded Russian Officer lying
in Port Arthur's Hospital.

And burst right under bows of Perseveit,
Thus splashing all her decks in clouds of spray ;
Another puff ; a whistling over head ;
Then shell went crashing into rock away.
A third shell follow'd after grim suspense,
With force terrific burst just over head ;
Our skilful Foes had got the range *exact*,
Then ten shore batteries answer'd signal dread.
Twelve warships quickly join'd in this reply ;
What follow'd simply stands beyond belief,
The sea beneath was mass of boiling foam,
From swishing plunge of shells on beach, or reef.
Commanding word the gunners could not hear,
With eight score guns now belching forth apace,
'Mid roar prolong'd o'er head of bursting shells
With fearful crash, in our contracted space.
We near were blinded all, by smoke and dust.
I did not feel excited any way,
I felt a kind of joy in scenes of death,
For *now* no terror gripp'd, most strange to say !
A moment's pause, then white-faced gunner ran,
He pointed down the edge of Cliff half way,
‡Quick-firing battery there was wisely placed,
To check a landing Force, and make full play.
A scene of wildest battle orgie then
I saw, shells bursting, whistling through the air ;
The earth now reeking foul, with stench and smoke,
Alas ! like water, blood ran everywhere.
Among the busy gunners shell had burst

‡From which 12,000 bullets speed on their errand
in 60 seconds.

With dread results, an awful sight indeed !
The splinter'd fragments caused appalling wounds ;
Steel gun in midst was broken like a reed.
The Japanese full Fleet soon steams away,
The smoke clears off, the sun's bright gleams appear;
Its glorious rays then gild the awful scene
Of havoc, wrought by modern warfare *here*.
For men's heroic service paid the State,
The Tsar's high marks of honour never fail ;
Saint Andrew's Cross adorns my breast of late ;
But yet my health and strength I now bewail."

9TH CANTO.

From Russia comes a strange, bewildering tale ;
The Peasants now with confidence believe
St. George bestride a foaming, fiery steed,
Will fight Japan, all mortal ills retrieve.
They think the Hero famed of Plevna sleeps,
But not in death, to wake with clarion call,
And issue forth to lead the Russian Arms
To conquest, 'neath whose sword all Foes will fall.
†A private letter comes from Soldier Russ
To Village Priest, with urgent firm request
That he would read to loved ones left at home
Of journey long, to follow war's behest.
"To reach far Petropavlovsk took four days,
"The overcrowded train toil'd on so slow ;
"We slept on hard plank beds, like berths arranged ;
"At Stations urged to walk, or sweep up snow.

†The Russian peasant is often unable to read.

“A welcome change, from over-heated train,
“Where air confined, caused headache more or less ;
“Newspapers on the line we could not buy,
“Nor extra food, so dear, from crowd and stress.
“A Scholar, now a Soldier, read some books ;
“An Officer these snatch'd away with speed,
“With no regard for men 'neath his command ;
“He said ‘ The Bible *only* you should read.’ ”
Japan's rare Fighting Admiral far-famed,
Hath still his grip on Russian Fortress great,
The *fifth* bombardment fierce hath now ensued,
His well-plann'd daring schemes no whit abate,
Torpedo Fleet, without the least mishap,
Was under fire throughout the previous night ;
And constant shell fire raged till three past noon,
The Squadron then withdrew unscathed from Fight.
It must be here remark'd, the Russian Fleet,
To meet its Foes, *at last* went out of Port,
But only sought to draw the Japanese
Beneath the guns of batteries strong of Fort.
There comes report, that on the self-same night
When Russians thought they might relax some care,
Mosquito Fleet crept round the shadow'd Coast
To Harbour Entrance, sinking Steamers *there*.
To show how dauntless courage fills each heart,
Three thousand Officers, and Seamen bold,
Without a moment's pause then Volunteer'd ;
In “List of Heroes” sought to be enroll'd.
The Tsaritsa shines as guiding spirit bright,
The head of Red Cross Nursing Sisters now ;
High ladies. rich and fair, to Guild belong,

With grace and tact to all decisions bow.
 Port Arthur doth in truth have little peace,
 Again Torpedo *ruse* has taken place,
 With fierce tornado fired from battleships ;
 All these events in two or three day's space.
 At early dawn Japan's Mosquito Fleet
 Once more on Fortress made *determin'd raid* ;
 Large Merchant Vessels, four, were seen approach,
 By Searchlight's use full plain the scheme was made.
 As escort acted six torpedo craft,
 All steaming offside, laden Vessels doom'd
 To sink in Port's Fairway, as "Narrows" known ;
 From Forts and Guard Ships then the cannon boom'd.
 With not the least effect it soon was seen,
 The Japanese came steady on apace,
 Not daunted by mere fact, that plot was known,
 But *Russian valour* counted not to face.
 ‡From Port, with *new* Destroyer built of late,
 A Russian Officer then broke away,
 With tiny ship he charged out on the Foe,
 With *splendid courage*, all must truly say.
 If Russian version should be strictly true,
 He saved Port Arthur from a serious blow,
 And singlehanded undertook the task ;
 ||On Fairway bank *one* ship was then laid low.
 The other three were sunk in Outer Bar,
 But *all* were wreck'd *outside* the "Narrows" then,
 This dauntless Officer, his work achieved,
 Had stranded boat, with loss of gallant men.
 §In deadly contest with torpedo-boats,

‡Lieut. Krinilsky, on Guard.

§ Six. || Russian Ships-

This brave Commander just escaped with life.
Then "Order" Tsar bestow'd of famed "St. George,"
For grand heroic conduct in the strife.

10TH CANTO.

The Fighting Admiral in last despatch,
Reports *success in part* of task he set,
In face of heavy fire from forts and ships ;
But *block complete* hath not been made, as yet.
"Four steamers off Port Arthur were convoy'd
By Fleets Torpedo, fine Destroyers too,
And, notwithstanding searchlights' constant flash,
For Harbour made, 'mid fire *proceeding through*;
And straight for 'Narrows' went in single line,
And into Inner Water dummies ran.
A Russian Officer torpedoed *two*,
So *two* alone then blocked the Fairway's span ;
These sunken ships lie now upon each side
Of famed Port Arthur's face, of Golden Hill.
An effort will be made to sink some more ;
Between these dummies runs a channel still.
I much regret the loss of life involved ;
In noble work an officer was shot ;
Commander Horose call'd upon his men
To take to boats, *he miss'd one*, leaving spot.
So then he search'd the ship, three times, in all ;
At last 'Sagino' found, who *had* been slain ;
In act of lighting fuse, when ship was struck,
He too was kill'd, so lost his life in vain.

As boat was leaving sinking Dummy Ship,
Beneath the fire of Forts, a hissing shell
Then struck Commander Horose on the head ;
In aim to render aid he nobly fell.
On him the Order prized of 'Rising Sun'
Hath been bestow'd by Emperor, of late :
To mark this Hero's death, a monument
As record famed will stand of service great.
I note, the Russian spirit hath revived,
I hope and trust their fleet will soon emerge
From Harbour, where too long it hath reposed,
And seek Japan's main Fleet, and battle urge."
The last attack on Port, the Russians own,
Had far more grave results than all the rest ;
Restricting movement much, of heavy ships ;
Since, two collided, lying near abreast.
Japan's fine Squadron still remains intact :
For *chance* will wait, and watch this Fortress great ;
A vigilant blockade will still enforce :
To gain its ends, no efforts will abate.
In piping times of peace, the Japanese
In field manœuvres were most clearly shown
Past masters quite of "detail" in each arm ;
Their great mobility so praised made known.
As "Transport Marvel" stands the light hand-cart,
On journey far enabling baggage train
To swift proceed, where horses cannot go ;
Nor traffic horse-drawn, rocky Heights to gain.
*On model French the Army *first* was raised ;
On German system moulded later still ;

* See Rear-Admiral Ingles.

The close formation Japanese discard.
 As skirmishers, they show unbounded skill.
 In fact they never fail to keep in touch,
 In rush to front tremendous speed is made,
 In fields of rice they lie, when time to halt
 And fire, like lightning orders are obey'd.
 Positions too they carry with great verve ;
 †If reinforced the firing line should be,
 The soldiers raise a wild, unearthly shout,
 Heard miles away like distant roar of sea.
 A Russian from Port Arthur gives account,
 Of recent grim events, which there befell,—
 A dismal silence reigns throughout the town,
 Unless bestirr'd by cannon-ball or shell.
 Since war-cloud burst the scene indeed hath changed,
 §The shops are closed, the streets of life bereft,
 The trains are full of streaming fugitives,
 With martial men alone in Fortress left.
 Time passes slow, 'tis like a city dead,
 Till sleeping men awake to awful sound
 Of cannons' roar at midnight with a start,
 From circling batteries on the Heights around.
 ‡On Sunday Garrison attended church,
 The Tsar's Ukase a Priest had scarcely read,
 When lo ! the glass in every window crash'd,
 The Earth was shaken by bombardment dread.

† To full extent.

§ Recently *by law* the shops are re-opened.

‡ The Troops unemployed.

IITH CANTO.

The veil of Eastern mystery is raised,
*For leading spirits, from all shackles free,
Now start o'er sea for regions *quite unknown* ;
A weary world awaits the strange decree.
A mighty struggle now begins on land :
The gallant Japanese manœuvred best,
So gained the *first success* against their foe ;
An omen bright, with which to plume their crest.
Alas ! this war is tragic on all sides,
Momentous contest stands, for death, or life,
Japan hath now colossal task in hand,
She stakes her *all*, in this tremendous strife.
War reigns 'twixt Empire old, so small, and brave,
And Empire so immense, that she hath posed
As greatest military power on Earth,
Since First Napoleon's spacious era closed.
Deep silence proved a fine strategic move,
And one Nippon could not at all forego ;
She keeps her purpose hid from foe and friend,
To strike, with swift effect, a telling blow.
The clever method used in landing troops
Marks triumph great, for gallant Japanese,
Exciting wonder in all strangers near,
All details master'd with such perfect ease.
Belligerents have now an equal Force ;
But Russia seems compell'd to subdivide
Her troops o'er district vast, which proves to foe
A great strategic boon, and helps to guide.

* War correspondents are permitted to quit Seoul with
" Sealed Orders."

By *silence*, Russia must have been perplex'd
To great extent, hence more diffused her force,
Ne'er concentrated full, at given point,
Not knowing threaten'd spot in Foemen's course.
The plans anent Port Arthur none can guess,
A fascinating problem to be solved :
An eastern mystery is now applied
To modern scientific war evolved.
Port Arthur's Journal "Novi Krai" describes
The scene on board the Cruiser Boyan Russe,
In last bombardment fierce by Japanese,
When storm of missiles Nippon's Fleet let loose.
The bursting shells bowl'd over man on man,
Until the decks were slippery with blood ;
On conning tower the Captain stood unmoved,
Projectiles falling round him, like a flood,
He telephoned to Captain of the guns,
Infusing fervent courage in the crew :
With wounded men the cockpit soon was filled,
Some forty were brought down, ere foes withdrew.
Amid the roar of guns, the hiss of shells,
Explosions' thunder loud, and splinters' smash,
And din of whirling engines too, so near,
The Surgeons *calmly* work'd through scare and crash.
At end of battle, as the foes drew off,
The officers on bridge then gave a cheer,
Caught up with mighty shout by all the crew,
From deck to deck resounding loud and clear.
The Captain wish'd to follow up the foe,
"Full speed ahead," was order just made known,
When Admiral's flagship then gave command,

“Return to Port Bayan,” was signal shown.
The “Hermit Kingdom” lies in martial grasp
Of Dai Nippon, the “Land of Rising Sun”;
From Yalu River’s southern bank now speed
The Russian Cossack Force, with horse and gun.
The Japanese, with swift advance due North,
Have seized upon Wiju at River’s mouth;
A most significant position hold,
By sea supplies can come from Base, due South.
From North Corea Russians now withdraw;
They may retreat and stand by River near,
In line from Artung sixty miles in length;
Or may fall back again, to town in rear.
The Japanese have fifty thousand men
Encamp’d, the Russians would require a Force
†As large, to hold the River’s Northern bank,
Manchurian side, to reaches high, near source.
Japan, by this strategic movement fine,
Hath swept the Russians from Corean land;
Without a fight, that could be call’d a blow,
Hath wrought with full effect achievement grand.

12TH CANTO.

The luck of war still follows brave Japan,
Of Eastern Seas soon Mistress she became;
From North Corea’s mountain district wild
The Cossacks swept, so paralysed their aim.
The Yalu River, near two miles in breadth,
Is very shallow, edged by muddy banks;

† The Yalu River.

Low reaches during spring-tide are in flood ;
As longest River in Corea ranks.
Now Yongampo is Wiju's base-in-chief,
So second Army disembarks quite near,
And forty Transports swiftly bring Land-Force,
Protected well by Cruisers in the rear.
While Troops are landing, *these* will take good care
No serious movement shall be made by foe ;
The Japanese are on the River nigh,
And so, in need, would help to strike a blow.
A novel operation now appears,
For Troops will cross the stream without their own
Gun-fire, for in their wake, torpedo-boats
Proceed, no skirmishers near side are thrown.
Each Transport carries guns—four seven inch,
Steam launches too, each with twelve-pounder gun ;
And these could shell the Foe off Northern bank ;
Light Cruisers up the River too could run.
The dreaded Cossacks fail'd in every case
To ascertain the plans by Foeman made,
Or check their movements when they hover'd near :
They now await attack with naught to aid.
The Russians have engaged in game of bluff,
Defensive lines impervious were held,
So said report, at many given points,
To unbelief, by *proof*, were Foes compell'd.
On bank of Yalu some enormous lines
Extending sixty miles were said to be,
The Japanese sent scouting party out,
Who swam across, but nothing could they see.
The Japanese aye carry rations full

To last three days, in quite emergent case,
 Of *this*, in dash to Wiju, would make use,
 Till ships brought up supplies to new found base.
 Nongampo now is open for freight ships,
 Thus, forward soon the Army can be brought
 From Anju, while the roads will be improved
 In rear, and base, to river's mouth then sought.

A GREAT RUSSIAN NAVAL DISASTER.

From doom'd Port Arthur comes momentous news ;
 O'er sea the sun of Russian hopes is set !
 Disaster most appalling thrills all mind
 Of friend and foe alike with deep regret.
 'Tis said, the lion-hearted Makaroff
 From Roadstead steam'd a few miles out to sea,
 Observing *some few* vessels Japanese,
 He thought successful fight there soon might be.
 On Cruiser Askold he had steam'd out once,
 On Novok too had reconnoitring been ;
 But as important fight with armour'd ships
 Was sought, his Flag on battleship was seen.
 On Petropavlovsk he set forth to sea,
 And not until some distance from the Port,
 Did he observe that he had drawn the whole
 Main Squadron Japanese near guns of Fort.
 The noble-hearted Makaroff was then
 Aware, a Force *superior* he would face,
 Full speed ahead he made for Harbour *then*,
 A running fight ensued at swiftest pace.
 †The " Fighting Admiral " had faster ships
 Could lessen soon the distance 'twixt each Force ;

† Admiral Togo.

'Tis said the Russian Fleet's retreat *confused*
Was due to shells throughout its homeward course;
The Flagship steam'd within two miles of Port,
And then alas! amid the blinding smoke,
And crashing shells, was by torpedo struck,
Or else by mine submerged, in one fell stroke.
The Squadron Japanese did soon surround
"Pobieda " with Torpedo-boats, and *these*
May have attention paid to Flagship Russ,
And so wrought damage with the greatest ease.
This episode, dramatic at all points,
Appalling in the dire and sudden fate
Of Russian Naval Hero so renowned,
Hath struck the Fleet with *panic*, up to date.
If Garrison should take the dread disease,
(For panic seems contagious in extreme,
Nerve strain have men endured for many weeks,)
Results might happen like some ghastly dream.
The superstitious Russian Soldiers, dull,
On foolish strange belief their faith now stake,
That Japanese "Magicians" are, who hold
Wierd *stones*, that courage from their Foes will take.
In Eastern seas the Russian Naval Power,
To use a tragic term, is now laid low ;
Her Flag hath lost its vaunted prestige proud,
Her Empire *thus* receives a crushing blow.

13TH CANTO.

*With late events the Naval struggle ends ;
To *Land* the drama's interest is transferr'd ;
'Tis *there* colossal Russia's fortunes wide,
Must be retrieved, from *ruin* be deterr'd.
Famed Kuropatkin *now* is Army's Chief ;
A mighty burden *one* man hath to bear ;
His Country's fate upon his shoulders rests ;
He goes to win success, or meet ill fare.
That Russia fails to hold her own at sea,
The recent demonstration clearly shows,
This must affect the scheme of this campaign,
As foe can land at will, and come to blows.
The power initiative Japan has soon ;
This every strategist doth strive to gain ;
To all chief inland stations sea-command,
Will give esteem'd security in main.
Whate'er surprise the future hath in store,
Mikado's Troops possess Korean land ;
From this position strong can ne'er be swept
By all the Russian forces now at hand.
Corea's Northern Frontier shows a line
Constructed well for sure defence, 'tis thought
A "Torres Vedras" well could form in strength,
If safe retreat, in land reverse, were sought.
With line well fortified, with strength in rear,
The Japanese must feel assurance great ;
This confidence will valour much increase,
As they await uncertain turn of fate.
Japan's famed Admiral hath sent despatch,

*Russia's Naval disasters.

Recounting great success in *eighth* attack
On Fortress Russ, and fight with hapless Fleet ;
Of stirring episodes there seem no lack.
Flagship he sank, "Pobieda" damaged sore,
By mines he laid one dark and rainy night ;
The wireless telegraph on Fleet install'd
Could call up battleships far out of sight.
From out of Harbour, lined with guardian guns,
Some Cruisers, acting as "decoy," enticed
The gallant Makaroff some fifteen miles,
When message sent to heavy ships sufficed.
The Flagship's tragic fate, with loss of life,
Hath made a deep impression on all hearts ;
The Petropavlovsk sank in minutes two ;
Electric mining gruesome fear imparts.
‡"Rockhoff," the signalman, a story tells
Of what he saw, and heard, in graphic style,
On board the Russian Flagship so ill doom'd ;
Which struck a mine, in vital part, erst-while :
"To Port, we were returning then *full pace*,
Our ship was leading ; when to meet the Foe
Some Cruisers out of Harbour issued forth,
From guns in bow fired sixteen shots or so.
They soon retired, as Japanese main Fleet
Was seen ; our ships, all told, but counted *nine* ;
On dim horizon Foes were first perceived,
With fourteen heavy battleships in line.
Against their armour'd Cruisers we had *one*,‡
On bridge I stand, the Signal book I lift,

†In wheel-house on bridge.

‡Bayan.

The Admiral's last order then he gives,
'Torpedo-boats return to Harbour swift.'
The Flagship then slowed speed, almost stood still,
With force terrific shook, when lo ! I hear
Explosion on explosion, sounding dread,
These seem'd to issue 'neath the bridge, or near.
To door I rush'd, but Helmsman could not pass,
So then with speed on window ledge I sprang,
And thus got free ; the ship was listing now,
And might o'erturn ; along the bridge I ran.
I saw the Admiral then wounded sore,
In blood quite smothered, lying on his face ;
I tried to raise him, when alas ! the ship
Gave sudden lurch, and seem'd to fall through space.
A fearful screech was heard, a frightful din,
'Mid clouds of smoke I saw the throngs of men ;
The scorching flames now leapt upon the bridge,
Where face to face with death I struggled then.
I stood upon the rail, till wash'd away,
I caught at passing wreckage near me thrown,
And then into the depths of ocean fell ;
I next remember'd falling spars alone."§
A Russian Admiral gives details too :—
"On high were thrown the funnel, bridge, and mast,
In air the wheel revolved 'mid clouds of smoke,
Ship sank head first, engulf'd in flames at last."

§This signalman was saved, with several of the crew. Being slightly wounded, he was conveyed to hospital.

14TH CANTO.

Port Arthur, Russian Fortress of ill fate,
Is once again the scene of dire event;
'Tis said the channel *now* is surely block'd;
This news to latest rumour credence lent.
A mine disaster Viceroy doth record;
To lay torpedoes steam-launch did proceed,
Of mines, already laid by Japanese,
The leading Officer *then* took no heed.
He lost his life and that of twenty men,
At harbour mouth did dread event ensue.
The Japanese had watch'd with deep intent
Close Channel then, sole way the ships got through.
And so in last attack upon the Port,
Eluding well the flash-lights sent around,
The dashing, clever Japanese crept in,
And laid their mines through narrow route they found.
A Russian Doctor, on his way Far East,
A vivid picture gives, when ills combine
To trouble all civilians—through the war—
When stranded at the stations on the line.
“‘Manchuria Station,’ cries Conductor loud,
When from the train he takes a hurried leap;
Upon the platform we at once descend,
Amid the baggage in chaotic heap.
In dim and fitful light of *one* oil lamp
'Tis puzzle great one's own effects to find,
'Mid noises, turmoil, shouting on all sides,
*Five roubles e'en, for Porter's help, few mind.
Ten roubles I will give,' a person shouts,

*Ten Shillings.

'Come quick!' but our Conductor cries 'Make way,
All passengers must leave the train at once,
Before all else the troops we must convey.'
In eager tone men asking method plann'd,
Were told the next spare train they must await;
So should descend and purchase tickets new;
This mandate all obey'd with speedy gait.
A fearful rush to office then took place,
The Clerk averr'd no need for hasty mood,
Another train will leave in *two day's time*;
All had to wait, with scarcely any food.
And so we settle down to scan ill-luck;
Another trouble stares us in the face.
Manchuria Station, very small in size,
Possesses three quite tiny rooms in base.
In these the inmates crowd of train entire,
From forty carriages now seeking rest,
Alas! unlucky ones must wait outside
In Station yard, to rest must try their best.
So deadly tired they sink on frozen ground,
A Guard approaches, rousing some thereby,
Poor souls! they have to wait the livelong night—
'If you now fall asleep,' he cries, '*you die.*'†
We wait some forty-eight odd hours on end,
Without a wink of sleep to help refresh
Our wearied minds and bodies so forlorn,
As weeks have pass'd, in this entangl'd mesh.
Port Arthur's fugitives arrive by train,
One woman startled all by strange attire,
With streaming hair, o'er night gear blanket thrown;

†The frost being so intense.

She fled from first bombardment's ruthless fire."
A danger great to Russian Troops is seen
At Harbin Junction on Siberian line:
At this important Town, and Station now,
The troops, stores, mounts, and forage all combine.
The Russian Army's concentrating point
Is now reported hotbed of disease;
The water source, though *ample*, is impure,
Obtain'd from shallow wells with greatest ease.
In normal state this Town itself last year
Was fever-stricken *then* to high degree,
The cold of winter served to stay disease,
With Sol's warm rays, grave danger there may be.
In time of peace, as in grim time of war,
With every Russian Regiment there is seen
A troupe of ballad singers, players skill'd
Upon the cymbal, pipe and tambourine.
To Eastern lands afar these now proceed,
To raise the spirits dull of vast Slav race,
Provincial songs of home all hearts will stir,
So troubadours the ills of war will face.
A Gipsy-like romantic air is joined
To plaintive words of new, or ancient lay,
This serves to rouse the heavy Soldier Russ,
The least advanced in *learning* of his day.

15TH CANTO.

On land the first great battle hath been fought,
The frontier line the Russians fail to hold,
From Kiu-lieu-cheng, and range of hills retreat,

Through Japanese attack both skill'd and bold.
By first strategic blow Japan hath seized
The key of Russian military strength,
Manchuria pierced, and border line hath won,
By holding Yalu River in its length.
With thirty thousand troops in full retreat
Before their foe, the Tsar must now awake
To full perception of his chance on land,
And sea ; with all Manchuria, too, at stake,
Quite open *now* to full invading force.
Mikado's Armies still great deeds await ;
This late event doth mark an era new,
In World's historic martial page so great ;
For Russia hath sustained the greatest blow
In Asia, ever felt, from *Power New* ;
Japan must take her place in foremost rank,
Her status "*Great*" be stamped on Western view.
'Tis said the Russians lost two thousand men,
*In this great struggle for the frontier line,
With thirty thousand men on range of hills
Four miles in length, defending earthworks nine.
On May the first, at dawn, the Kiu-lieu-cheng
Bombardment fierce began, by hour of *eight*
The Japanese destroy'd seven forts, in all,
And seized the guns, despite resistance great.
The Russians open'd fire—eight thousand yards—
From forty-eight light guns, their practice *poor*,
Their foes had heavy guns—some 4.7-inch—
Their aim so *good* success did full insure.
The Japanese soon turn'd the Russian flank ;

*The Japanese loss is stated at 1,200.

They threw one thousand shells in trenches too ;
They captured *all* the guns, some twenty odd,
With officers and men a goodly few.
The Russian Force at Artung made last stand ;
† Their foes brought up their ships to aid the fight ;
The Russian right wing broke, o'er soon dismay'd,
And panic-stricken, madly took to flight.
This fear was caused by Officers shot down,
Sharpshooters Japanese took *perfect aim* ;
If Chief but show'd one moment for command,
He was at once pick'd off in deadly game.
The Russians fought a rearguard action fierce
From Yalu River, still they met defeat
White flag their batteries show'd—enveloped quite—
‡ When, losing half their men in battle heat,
O'er hills in wild confusion many fly,
'Neath brushwood hide ; away their weapons throw,
With colours loved ; thus twenty guns and eight
Were captured by their shrewd, victorious foe.
§ The first war message, sent from Front direct,
A vivid picture shows of efforts made
By General Kuroki's valiant force
To meet his plans, with most efficient aid.
He wish'd to concentrate his *strength in full*,
In men, and guns, before effective move
For crushing down complete his Foe's defence
On Frontier line ; his force work'd in one groove.
In seeming great delay before attack,

† With 4.7 inch guns.

‡ And having their horses shot as well.

§ By war correspondent.

The Japanese were making *sound, good roads*,
Thus pushing forth their sap to "Yalu" wide ;
Supplies the Coolie thousands brought in loads.
The Staff could *thus* send on the "stores" to front ;
The guard with these then *over small* did seem,
But *this* would well conceal the work in hand,
Till Army's main advance in mighty stream.
The line of march for many hundred miles
Devoid of all firm tracts, or bridges strong,
Was quagmire, trench'd with rugged torrent beds ;
A work Titanic wrought, in route so long.
On *modern lines* Japan now wages war ;
'Tis well that Europe should quite grasp this fact—
And, *duly civilised* at every point,
Consistent proves in every word and act.
The Russian General Kuropatkin famed,
The greatest "strategist" the Tsar can show,
Outwitted, out-manœuvred, meets defeat,
His reputation shatter'd at one blow.

16TH CANTO.

The Vladivostock Squadron hath appear'd
In second phase of naval struggle great,
From icebound harbour hath at length escaped,
To run the chance of conflict, *over late*.
It made a most successful raid at once ;
Torpedo-boats soon enter'd harbour near
Gensan, and sank a merchant steamer small,
As transport used ; no cruisers did appear.
These kept together *intercepting news*,

A wireless message sent by Japanese,
Who said "Their Fleet was steaming on full pace,"
So cruisers then returned to port with ease.
Next eve a laden transport these espied,
Detach'd from escort by dense fog at night ;
The seamen Japanese were then transferr'd
To ships, which enter'd harbour ere day-light.
*Two hundred valiant soldiers would not yield,
A Russian prison ne'er held men so brave,
Like "Samuri" of old they fought till death,
And chose the ocean bed for honour'd grave.
On May the Fourth just past mid-day, 'tis said,
The "Fighting Admiral" scored great success,
Port Arthur's entrance *then* he surely block'd,
Except for smallest craft in time of stress.
A night attack the Japanese had tried,
A brilliant effort made to bar road-way ;
This fine heroic work did not succeed,
Until renew'd attempt, in fog next day.
The Naval officers of night attack
All thought by daylight they might take more heed
Of salient points, and easier task might find,
So fleet dashed into entrance *then* full speed.
Success these Naval Chiefs determin'd were
To gain, although through much fear'd loss of life,
By death of half the noble men employ'd
In glorious task, amid such deadly strife.
†In three large groups were fire-ships Japanese,

No men wearing the "Imperial Uniform" will surrender.

† Night attack

Five came from North, and three came on from
South,

And two down centre moved ; on mines *these* struck,
And soon flared up, then sank at harbour's mouth.

" A murd'rous fire shore batteries now pour'd forth,

‡ The gunners work'd, as ne'er they work'd before ;

The fire-ships still came on amid the storm

Of shells and bullets, with loud cannons' roar.

O'er sea, at streak of dawn, a picture grand

Was seen, in softest light of waning moon,

Across the orange flashes from the guns

Came purple fire from signal rockets soon,

These casting ever-changing gleaming tints,

On neutral shade of leaden colour'd sea ;

Then came explosions dread, as mines were struck

By boats torpedo, which did seaward flee."

This fortress doom'd is now cut off from land

And sea, no helping hand is there to save ;

With Dalny captured, lies in crushing grasp

Of Dai Nippon's heroic forces brave.

A master-stroke Japan hath now evolved,

The greatest yet, *by far*, that she hath shown ;

At Adam's Port hath landed troops in force,

On Pi-tsu-wo some part of Army thrown.

She thus holds " Neck of Land " in full command,

With Ta-lien-wan around and Newchwang, too ;

Port Arthur's railway also she hath seized,

So fortress stands imperill'd now anew.

'Tis thought Nippon can hold the land with ease

As far as Mukden, so can get supplies ;

‡ A Russian account.

She hoists Mikado's banner, "Rising Sun,"
So might of Russia boldly thus defies.
She turns the Russian lines at Port Newchwang,
To firm resist attack,—these had been traced,—
From *sea and West*; and other lines she turns,
To meet attack from *East*, all interlaced.
While Russian force advances due south-east,
O'er quagmire roads, at five mile pace a day,
By "rail command" the Japanese can cut
Their line *in rear*, disturb supplies that way.
The Russian General *then* would be thrown back
Upon the steep wild mountain ranges near;
His foemen know by heart each rugged Pass;
Manchurian bandits too may prowl in rear.
To Tsar the General sends a grave despatch,
"At Yalu River troops were seized with fright,
And so escaped in *panic* from their foe;
No horse, no cart, no gun was saved in flight.
Disaster great was march on Feng-huan-cheng."
The General thinks Manchuria now is lost,
§ As well as Liao-Tung, with sea-power gone,
And ports round coast now seized, at Russia's cost.
And Russian Admiral to Tsar reports,
"Port Arthur's Squadron is, alas! *non est*;
One single vessel sound and fit remains;
Soon fortress must succumb, as all the rest."
The Island Empire, "Rising Sun" of East,
Profound impression makes on western thought;
Her arms triumphant o'er colossal foe;
By *skill* hath vanquished in all battles fought.

§ The Peninsula.

17TH CANTO.

The Anglo-French Convention now achieved
Is noble work *esteemed* by thoughtful minds,
No Anglo-Russian compact can be made,
With Autocratic Power no treaty binds.
The Russian Empire vast as by-word stands
For flagrant breach of faith, supreme deceit,
The fault doth lie in *form* of Ruling Power,
Divided into sections, most complete ;
And each *detach'd*, with Tsar alone as head.
The Policy by Foreign Office shown
Doth never speak for Empire, *as a whole*,
This Bureau acts in word and deed alone.
The Public voice it doth not represent,
But only one small section of the same,
To Foreign Powers *this* gives *its word assured*,
Which next Bureau discards *with other aim*.
In England, France, United States as well,
The Foreign Office represents complete
The Nation's will, is authorised to speak
In name of State, and show a clear, true sheet.

The sentry duty on Siberian line
Hath been most trying during recent cold,
From great exposure troops in numbers died ;
But this long line the Russians safe must hold.
As through Siberian country railway runs
'Mid swarms of convicts, who on crime are bent,
(Beyond the range of Japanese) a Guard
Was always placed, which sure protection lent.

In East Siberian land, so bleak and bare,
The timid reindeer are for draught in use,
In lieu of horses, as they feed on moss,
In that drear climate grass ne'er grows profuse.
Throughout Japan the horses poor and scarce
*For military use alone can aid ;
And so the wounded Japanese in carts
To hospital by bullocks are convey'd.
The Army Japanese hath *one* weak point,
'Tis said its horses are of worst breed found,
The troopers rank as poorest horsemen known,
The force five thousand, *this* by no means sound.
Throughout Manchuria, wild Corea too,
The land is rough, oft mud is ankle deep,
'Tis thought, *small force* will scarce be any loss,
A *larger one* might ne'er advantage reap.
When regiment Japanese from depot starts,
From various ailments men oft lag behind,
These firm resolve to fight for native land,
Jinrickshas hire, and so their comrades find,
Of all the nations in the world Japan
Doth most encourage in her men, from youth,
Athletic exercise, for use in war
On sea, or land,—with grand results in truth.—

The port of "Dalny" Russians have blown up ;
A kind of Eastern Moscow now is seen ;
Five million pounds on city spent in vain !
"Commercial centre" this might once have been

* For Cavalry and Artillery.

With ample quays, wide streets, and handsome shops;
Port Arthur—held on lease—a *War port* sole,
But Dalny, end of great Siberian line,
As *trade Emporium*, held important role.
'Mid barren hills was *shallow*, shelving bay,
Deep mud was dredged away, to make more space,
A fine sea-front, and spacious boulevards built;
Umbrageous gardens beautified the place.
By Tsar's command this barren site afar
Became the capital of Eastern land,
A noble city, worthy title great,
With spacious Square, 'mid avenues at hand,
Fine monuments, official buildings vast,
And handsome houses, having park-like grounds,
A grand cathedral built in florid style;
† But *commerce* kept to well-mark'd old time bounds.

† Some dogs with special training will be used
By Russian forces during this campaign,
To search for wounded men, and cordials give,
So prove to ambulance a precious gain.
In Winter Palace famed, St. Petersburg,
A hall is set aside for loving work;
Tsaritsa shines as guiding spirit bright
'Mid noble women, who no task will shirk.
A workroom pure and simple this is made,
Where requisites for hospital are wrought,
And garments too, prepared for use of troops;
In war's sad advent highly prized, and sought.

† Dalny did not attract general trade.

‡ Taught by Major Richardson, U.S.A.

18TH CANTO.

To "Fighting Admiral's" victorious Fleet
At last a dread disaster hath occur'd.
Some ten miles nautical from fortress great,
A battleship was struck by mine bestirr'd.
Two Russian boats torpedo from the port
Escaped, some Chinese junks in line came last,
To place in path of vessels Japanese,
Patrolling coast, some mines—not anchor'd fast.
The Japanese have since laid mines anew,
To catch torpedo-boats, and any junk;
All navigation *thus* suspended seems;
One Chinese boat, while laying mines, was sunk.
The battleship Hatsuse had been engaged
Protecting troops, while landing near—in bay;
Two cruisers soon collided in a fog,
And one was ramm'd and sunk the selfsame day.
Japan's victorious General Kuroki
Is held in estimation, quite as great
As "Fighting Admiral" of wide renown,
His deeds in Chinese War men highly rate.
In early days he pass'd through troubled times
The Revolution in his native land
Regenerating power hath proved indeed,
Results prodigious soon appear'd at hand.
To "fighting Family of high repute
He doth belong, is sixty years of age,
A ripe and full experience he owns
Of *ancient* style and *new*, in warfare's page.
The Army changes soon he closely watch'd,
And then o'ercame his predilection great

*For "brave old style" his family upheld,
 By which renown was won at early date.
 Accepting soon new scientific style;
 To master modern tactics studied then;
 At captured fortress Wei-hei-wei, he earn'd
 Distinction great, as "leader born, of men."
 The scientific methods of Japan
 Have been throughout this war of greatest gain
 "Field telephone" install'd in huts, *en route*,
 †Kept "lines" in touch, *first time* in this campaign.
Distrust is felt by Russians in the field;
Unrest, throughout the Empire, too, is great,
 Withdrawal from Manchurian State, of troops
 ‡And Dalny—mushroom city—left to fate.
 The general conduct of this *needless* war,
 Both discontent, and want of faith beget;
 In Central Russia, riots have occurred,
 Which Rulers with disastrous measures met.
 Through every province newspapers are bann'd,
 In Petersburg, and Moscow, too, as well;
 And those with *previous* bias leal to State,
 As "public voice," officials wish to quell.
 One hears from every quarter in the field
 Of vacillation, constant change of plan,
 And Russian Army's want of confidence.
 As Chiefs fall out, while ways and means they scan.
 The Russian race is volatile in mood;
 To depth descends of fatalistic gloom,
 Or height ascends of wild mercurial glee;
 For "war," predicting "victory, or doom."

*Samurai. †Communications ‡Built at cost of five millions.

In youth, the Cossack joins his native force
 At eighteen years of age; ne'er gets release
 §Till twenty years of service he can show;
 ||For Ural Cossacks, term doth sooner cease.
 Pell-mell together, with their docile mounts,
 In horse-box huddled, Cossacks wend their way,
 And lumber slowly onward to the front,
 When day succeeds, interminable day.
 In some far distant hour that fate ordains
 Their destination reach; they sing and play
 And so beguile the time, repeat refrains
 Of land they leave behind, now far away.
 Perchance, on line of route they hear of some
 Disaster great to Russian arms anew;
 They then sing "Nitchewo"—(no matter, means),
 In vogue at home; scarce show much feeling true.

CHRISTIANITY IN JAPAN.

A great religious movement now prevails,
 An influential meeting hath been call'd
 To formulate a project grand in aim,
 That Christian Church by State might be install'd.
 But independent in its lines throughout;
 In view of education question now,
 The leading men believe the time hath come;
 ¶ "To Christian elements Japan should bow,
 For this religion all the Nations great,
 And civilised, have held, through time's long span,"
 So Edict soon may be enforced by State,
 To set up "Christian faith" throughout *Japan*.

§ Volunteers.

¶ Leading speech quoted.

|| Actual service with the colours seven years.

19th CANTO.

THE GREAT BATTLE OF KINCHAU.

A sweeping victory the Japanese
Have won; by capture of Port Arthur's key,
A mighty effort with success was crown'd,
By help of naval force in Yellow Sea.
The furious struggle lasted o'er five days,
The *final* fierce assaults o'er sixteen hours,
When Japanese then storm'd the Russian works,
Like hail, the deadly missiles fell in showers.
At point of bayonet they drove their foes
From trench to trench, a murderous fight accrued,
Down Nanshan Heights the Russians slow were swept,
From point to point were hotly soon pursued.
The town, and castle wall'd, of famed Kinchau,
Were taken *first*, without much stress, or strain,
Objective point was Russian works immense
On "Nanshan Hill," due south the project main.
These great defensive works were strongly placed,
On range of hills, from town, three miles away,
Protected well by light, and heavy guns,
By mines, barb'd fence, and search-lights' piercing ray.
To prove the Russian range, scouts Japanese
Crept up quite close, and saw ten forts in all,
Quick-firing guns as well—which made good play,
And rifle-pits, that Russians did instal.
The Japanese found "gap" in Russian line,
Of *this*, they took advantage with great skill;
Took up position *first* on hills due East,
Then massing troops behind, did "angle" fill.
The Russian force was posted on Kinchau

In strength, and Nature gave strategic aid ;
The Nanshan forts were arm'd with *heavy* guns ;
† By Japanese no siege-guns could be laid.
Mikado's fleet gave most efficient help,
Four gun-boats cannonading from the Bay,
These join'd the land force, which had light-field guns,
And silenced many forts, with short delay.
Ere battle, Russians tried to draw attack,
But *this* the Japanese at once declined,
The Russian guns had slowly open'd fire :
Their foes were scouting, so all forts outlined.
Another strong position on a hill
Behind the Nanshan stronghold they unveil'd,
Where many shelter-trenches were display'd ;
Reconnaissance, *at all points never fail'd*.
The Japanese swept Russians from Kinchau ;
All night the battle raged upon the hills.
Position storm'd, almost impervious deem'd
By rush, on rush, which long their death roll fills.
The Japanese a deadly cross-fire met,
For close, a Russian gun-boat came in Bay, ‡
Which, hotly, then bombarded their left flank,
But *last assault* turned fortunes of the day.
In General Oko's late despatch he says,
"All Russian guns we captured—seventy-eight—
The *whole* Artillery in position placed
On Kinchau range of hills, we now can state.
The First Division was in centre ranged,
The Third on left, the Fourth then form'd right wing,

† On account of transport difficulties.

‡ Talien-wan.

In this formation on Kinchau we march'd,
On height Nanshan our frontal strength did fling.
A section of our force attack'd Kinchau,
The town and castle wall'd, we captured soon ;
Attack on Nanshan was arranged for dawn,
Through fog, the guns were late,—no light of moon—
Our foes replied with all their heavy guns :
Our warships aided well, from Kinchau Bay
From hour of six, with well directed aim ;
The Russian fire had slacken'd ere mid-day.
And then despite renew'd artillery fire,
Our Foot advanced, and soon positions gain'd
Within nine hundred feet of foemen's first
Defensive works, and *there* short time remain'd,
The Russian open-works were silenced quite
Ere noon ; from Bay their gunboat open'd fire, §
Five launches too, then tried to land a force,
Our troops advanced, so these did soon retire.
Foe's great defensive works our guns essay'd
To batter down, and batteries silence quite,
To cover thus, assault by gallant Foot ;
But not till *eve* did breach appear in sight.
Our ammunition had at last run low ;
A *furious final spurt* artillery made,
Assisted by our battleships in Bay, ||
On given point, gave concentrated aid,
We made a mighty effort then *en masse*,
The Fourth Division grandly gain'd the height,
The setting sun then saw 'The Rising Sun,'
Japan's proud flag triumphant wave ere night."

§ Off Dalny.

|| Kinchau Bay.

20TH CANTO.

A RUSSIAN ACCOUNT OF THE BATTLE
OF KINCHAU.

A well-known military critic Russ,
In *version true*, much interest gives, at length—
Of Kinchau's hard contested battle, fought
On range of hills, of great opposing strength.
Obtaining information well assured
Of Russian guns, with their position true,
Intrenchments too, defined, from General Staff
Artillery strength adjusting thus anew.
The Russian guns, there, numbered ninety-five,
From mountain guns, to eight-inch pieces ranged,
Machine-guns not included in the list,
Ten such were found, when "sides" by fate were
changed.

The Japanese then captured eighty-eight,
Both light, and heavy guns, on this great day.
Behind the Isthmus our positions stood,
Our rear twelve versts in length from Dalny Bay.
The Russian right flank ran along the hills
To town of Ta-lien-wan; the centre lay
On Nanshan height, which rises bold and, steep :
Left flank near touched the sea at Kinchau Bay,
Position Russ then ran on side by side
With rail to Ta-lien-wan, so cover'd line,
Our front lay facing Isthmus through its length ;
Right flank well fortified by gun and mine.
Mount Samson's *southern base* was made a fort ;
On "citadel," our *centre* had relied

Near wall'd Kinchau, with fort, and field-works too ;
Our left flank front, remain'd unfortified.
On Nanshan Hill was fortress, having ditch ;
Barb'd fence, and ramparts high, with mines in front,
And then push'd out to Isthmus were redoubts
In "storm," this central point would bear the brunt.
This fortress arm'd with sixteen heavy guns,
Eight also on right flank ; but facing sea
At Kinchau Bay, left flank had three field-guns.
Through line, twoscore, and fortress guns were three.
Behind entrenchments, near the Height Nanshan,
Our greatest mass of infantry was placed,
Thrown out were small detachments in advance,
Which first, in great assault, the foemen faced.
To occupy Mount Samson, Russians fail'd ;
This post important Japanese secured ;
In height above Nanshan some hundred feet, ‡
Their siege-guns' range, on centre Russ assured.
Artillery first began this battle fierce,
Mount Samson's guns belch'd forth at dawn of day ;
Two gun-boats soon bombarded well and true
Left flank behind Nanshan, from Kinchau Bay.
Then after preparation so severe
The Japanese march on to storm the Height,
Advancing force, positions Russ surround,
In horse-shoe form gigantic, come in sight.
This open'd on Kinchau : the centre form'd
By batteries on Mount Samson—so well placed—
In columns two, right flank, with field guns moved
Due north of Height, and Kinchau Castle faced.

‡ Several.

In early morn, *these* moved on, near Kinchau ;
A five-hour cannonade prepared the way ;
The Russian force soon met severe cross fire,
But still it kept its ground, made lengthen'd stay.
To gain possession of the Hill Nanshan,
A fierce and bloody battle did ensue,
A furious nine-hour cannonade was dealt,
From heavy guns on Height, and gun-boats too.
In spite of this tremendous hot cross fire,
The Russians, stubborn, steady, held their ground ;
With sixteen heavy guns they met their foe,
And field guns many, scatter'd death around.
At last this fateful day began to wane,
The Japanese Commander thought, at length.
Supports from Russian sea base, might arrive ;
So, then he storm'd position with full strength.
Then under murd'rous fire from forty guns,
And scores of thousand rifles-magazine,
The Japanese rush'd on in thick firm lines,
Destroying barb'd entanglements—so keen—
And filling in the ditches as they climb'd
Up sides of vast entrenchments wide and deep,
Mid bursting shells, which deadly havoc dealt,
Grenade explosions constant, *on they leap* !
The Japanese *persistent* climb'd the hill ;
With bayonet, they charged three times right well,
To be repulsed with awful loss of life,
But gather'd once again as evening fell,
To make their *final grand victorious charge* ;
The Russians worn and weary then gave way ;
For sixteen hours the battle fiercely raged ;
O'er Nanshan Height, the "Sun Flag" waved that day !

21ST CANTO.

The Russian General, moving down due South,
To lessen pressure on Port Arthur sought;
So forced campaign into a crisis grave;
Supreme disaster thus to army wrought.
Which threatens now, indeed, to quite o'erwhelm
By far the greater part of his *whole force*
In dire calamity, and bitter loss,
His troops already crush'd by fatal course,
By General Oku scatter'd more or less
In hard fought two days' struggle, stubborn, tense,
Have lost a battle, which may mean the *end*
Of this great *needless war* in fullest sense.
From mountain range the Tsar's Commanding
Chief
Emerged, and threw out two divisions quite,
Some forty thousand men, by line of rail
March'd then *one hundred miles*—no foes in sight.
In order that the General Russ might not
Be left in air, another force was sent
Of equal strength, push'd out from Liao-yang
Midway, by rail, and good support this lent.
At Kaiping, where 'tis now believed the Chief
Himself will join with all his force complete,
To make third link in this strategic chain,
So "forced advance," could cover in retreat.
The Generals Japanese then *couchant* lay,
'Till dispositions Russ were outstretch'd far,
To widest limit, so was greatest space
Between each part, *this*, prompt support would bar.
And *then, and not till then*, the Japanese

Offensive operations took, advised
By sound and faultless judgment well pronounced,
With *instant competence*—so highly prized.
Advancing by the line of rail due north
Of Adam's Port, then General Oku skill'd,
At dawn, engaged the foe, and crumpled up
Advanced positions, which with strength were filled ;
Then after progress well sustain'd all day,
Against a stubborn, steady, fine defence,
The main position gain'd at fall of night,
The Russians then fell back in darkness dense.
But General Oku would not be denied ;
At dawn next day he was in touch again,
With force determined he once more attack'd,
Dispersing foe, due north with might and main.
A wounded Russian officer reports—
“ The front, in afternoon of second day,
Extended near ten miles, both armies full
Engaged ; 'neath range of hills, the Russians lay.
With great effect the General Japanese
Then hurl'd his infantry in *masses dense*
Upon positions Russ, rush after rush ;
And *then*, began to waver, strong defence.
Two hundred guns pour'd forth their murd'rous fire,
Machine, and mountain guns adapted well
To district mountainous ; but Russian guns
Were far too heavy, *thus* ill fate befell.
The loss sustain'd by Russians so severe,
Was caused by trenches, both *exposed and low*,
The shrapnel fire thus playing havoc dire ;
Quite matchless skill our foemen's gunners show.”

The Russian infantry in one brief stage,
Were passing through a valley, full in sight,
When batteries Japanese rain'd shot and shell
With grim death-dealing force in this dread fight.
The Russians *now* are held to have been wrong
In leaving strong entrenchments, ere they knew
The Japanese positions, without doubt.
A murd'rous fire on "right" did soon ensue.
Sharp Shooting Regiment fine, "Siberian First,"
To pieces cut, was decimated quite ;
The fire of fifty guns on given point,
Was concentrated full, with deadliest might.
The Japanese this district know quite well ;
Are judges great, of distance, also ground ;
They hide their batteries with consummate skill,
Work *these*, in manner masterly all round.
This hard contested battle "Teliss-u"
For Russians, proved a cruel, grave defeat ;
Some forty thousand troops were well disposed,
By Japanese artillery fire were beat.
This struggle ended with great loss of life ;
† Reports are varied—no statistics true—
But many thousand good devoted men
Were slain, so valued lives, both countries rue.
Attempt to raise the siege of fortress great
Hath failed at every point—as sure forecast ;
Three armies threaten now the Russian force,
Fair Fortune hides her face, as in days past.

† The loss of the Russians, with prisoners, is estimated
at ten thousand.

22ND CANTO.—PORT ARTHUR.

The Russian Squadron doom'd, is once again
Completely wreck'd by most disastrous blow ;
‡A battleship, torpedoed twice, went down
With loss of life, reports—oft varied—show.
Another ironclad, and cruiser, too,
Disabled quite, by Admiral of fame ;
Who handles force with skill and promptitude,
And thereby wins a great and honour'd name.
Japan's famed Admiral, in modern war,
Resembles Nelson close, of glorious past ;
A great historic, naval page will add ;
This record, too, in classic form, *will last*.
From great beleaguer'd fortress sallied forth
The damaged war-ships—all repair'd, though slight ;
The Russian Admiral had doubtless thought
To make a dash for liberty by night.
A Japanese patrol saw Perseviet
And battleships emerge from port ere noon,
With some destroyers near the entrance small
Of roadstead, on the twenty-third of June.
Their presence soon to squadron was made known,
A wireless message flew with lightning's speed ;
The Admiral advanced his fleet entire,
Except the ships reserved for transport need.
Six battleships, five cruisers too, in line,
The Russian fleet's roll number'd on that day,
And fourteen fine destroyers swell'd the force,
All anchor'd near the entrance of fairway.
The "Fighting Admiral" full details sends :

‡Contradicted.

“Our foes steam’d south, when they emerged from
port,
With boats torpedo spreading like a fan ;
Then, sighting our whole fleet, return’d to fort.
For one half-hour these guardians we engaged ;
The Russian fleet was out of harbour shut,
As tide was low, so moor’d outside in line,
With steel torpedo nets, which we could cut.
Soon after hour of nine, five miles from port,
Fourteenth Flotilla made the *first* attack
In rear of foe, the Fifth Flotilla near,
Soon follow’d close in wake, with speed, no lack.
The Russian fleet disorder’d fled to port,
And anchor’d in the roadstead after ten,
Where we made *eight attacks* before the dawn :
One battleship we twice torpedoed then.
Soon after three o’clock, when moon had set,
Torpedo-boat flotillas crept along
In silence deep, until they near’d their foes,
And then each boat dash’d boldly mid the throng,
And fired torpedoes, in the crashing din,
Mid shrieking broadsides, flashing searchlights’
glare,
Which blinded our heroic Japanese,
And thundrous cannonades that rent the air
In volumes water o’er each boat was cast
By heavy fire, without the guns of fort
These batteries strong, on shore, could not be used,
As Russian fleet was anchor’d off the port.,”
The two great fleets were opposite once more
At sea, and yet no action then evolves,

The lack of *promptness* Russians show'd again,
That "secret" which successful tactics solves.
There seems to be some singular defect
In Russian temperament, which causes halt,
In fateful moment, as the crisis comes ;
When hesitation means momentous fault.
To Russian naval force disasters come
In one resistless wave, with shock, on shock ;
When part of fleet from port again emerged
A warship struck a mine near Tiger Rock.

A submarine hath met a doleful fate,
At mooring in the Neva, sank like stone,
Her crew too large, of inexperienced men ;
A "wash" from passing ship, was cause alone.
A Russian officer good version gives :
"I felt a sense of suffocation great,
From fumes of storage batteries, noisome, rank,
I fear'd—as in a dream—dark looming fate !
Then seething rush of water did o'erwhelm,
Blown through the man-hole with escaping air,
By force of whirlwind swept, *I then was saved !*
But lay unconscious, 'till restored by care."

23RD CANTO.—JULY, 1904.

The next few weeks will stamp unerring mark
Upon this needless war's vast fortunes strange ;
Japan's great path of conquest check'd and marr'd,
Or consummated full, with change, on change.

The Russian hold upon Manchuria soon,
Will either be relax'd, or stronger be ;
Observers neutral then of struggle great,
The world's wide fortunes alter'd soon may see.
At present date, upon the Russian side,
The saddest contrast now appears in view,
Between expected triumphs full, complete,
And signal, fell disasters, oft in lieu.
The fact is clear, that " war " above all else,
Is conflict stern and sure, between *foresight*,
Possess'd by foes, in great, or less degree ;
Conclusions, Russia fail'd to form aright.
All through the war, on either land, or sea,
And during diplomatic struggle long,
Was quite at fault in calculations made
Of Island Empire's power, resourceful, strong.
Historic records show no war like *this*,
So highly organised in every phase,
And carried on by Japanese in form
So technical, so *thorough* in all ways.
The valiant Islanders determin'd were
To stake *existence*, in this war—no less—
" Necessity " hath proved indeed once more
Aim's pivot true, enforcing thus success.
Responsibility hath now compell'd
The utmost caution, strength develop'd well ;
This Nation concentrated *every force*
To fight " Colossus "—deemed by old world spell.
For struggle's issue great, of life and death,
For ten whole years Japan hath well prepared ;
No problem grave of war e'er had before,

Such study deep, prolong'd, no effort spared.
'Tis thought the Japanese good maps possess,
Of all the lands now held by Russian force,
Far better than their foemen's Staff obtain'd ;
Which show each mountain pass in war-path's
course.

The Vladivostock Fleet from port emerged,
In touch at last with squadron Japanese,
Which guards "Tsu-sima Straits," so hovers near ;
Through fog, the Russian fleet escaped with ease.
The warships Russ were steaming on north east,
When sighted by the Japanese ere night,
And off Tsu-sima, distant some ten miles ;
Who turn'd, gave chase, and thus brought on the fight.
When foemen's presence Russians had discern'd,
They fled, when foes pursued at fullest speed,
Torpedo-boats went steaming on ahead,
In range of Russian guns, but took no heed.
They dash'd on smartly, tried to get quite close,
But fail'd, could not torpedoes then discharge
At Warships Russ, who fiercely shell'd the boats.
When lights went out! and fleet sped on at large.
The Russians pour'd out *concentrated* fire,
By aid of dazzling search rays' fullest light ;
For fifteen minutes' space, fell bursting shells,
Then darkness supervened—with peaceful night.
To lessen pressure on Port Arthur famed,
The Vladivostock squadron tried to draw
Mikado's fleet from guard of Eastern Straits :
This bait his force declined, the ruse foresaw.
For Kamimura has again refused

To be enticed beyond the easy reach
 Of Japanese blockading squadron main ;
 A cautious lesson, *this* doth fully teach
 The purport true, of sortie, he knew well,
 Or on to Vladivostock would have steam'd ;
 His vessels on his foemen greatly gained ;
 To reach his quarry's base he never dream'd.
 To seek a refuge either soon or late,
 For Vladivostock, foes would surely make ;
 He would have steam'd for harbour at full speed,
 And Skrydloff's squadron he would thus o'ertake.
 The "Fighting Admiral" determin'd seems
 To run no risk with battleships at all,
 So long as he attains his end, and aim,
 †By craft with ease replaced, whate'er befall.

24TH CANTO.

At Tokio, an order clear, precise,
 Hath issued been, "Interpreters to wait
 On foreign correspondents at the war,
 Must hold the *Christian Faith*, their tenets state.
 So name of Japanese may be upheld
 Among the world's chief nations great and wise,
 Begetting deep respect, with trust complete ;
 To height supreme, soon Dai Nippon may rise !"
 This news, the Bishop Protestant hath sent ;
 It plainly shows the trend of ruling power ;
 The character of Christian Japanese

† Torpedo-boats

Is held in high esteem, in present hour.

A gracious meed of praise—most justly earned—
In late Despatch from Mukden hath been paid
To Japanese, who aye, on stricken field,
To Russian wounded give, aye, skilful aid.
The three most famous surgeons in Japan
For great war hospitals are now engaged,
The finest talent, with equipment good
For treating wounded men, in warfare waged.
War correspondents with the Japanese,
Are not allow'd with General Oku's force,
Nor with besieging army "Taku-shan";
The Russian scouts must show their full resource,
Along a front two hundred miles, or more;
Of foemen's strength, obtain an insight true,
And ascertain position at all points,
And discount feints, and ruses—not a few.
Still, o'er dramatic movements, curtain falls,
The Japanese keep silence most complete,
But yet reports are issued true and false,
And *these*, the Chinese merchants oft repeat.
Along Port Arthur's second range of hills
Are Japanese in force, and they are bent
On massing troops on line of Eastern Coast,
On "Camp Marine," to make a sure descent,
Which doth command chief pass through line of
hills,
In rear of Port, a post defended strong,
A vital spot, 'tis thought, to safe ensure

This fortress great, and line in rear so long.
Some twenty thousand men defend this camp,
(Marines, and sailors from the fleet—of late) ;
In Chino-Japanese past war, this spot
Mikado's troops posses'd, ere fortress great.
The North-east slope of mountain Taku-shan,
'Tis said, the Japanese at length have gain'd,
The summit less than three full miles from Port,
A splendid post for siege-guns have obtain'd.
With Japanese Division on this height,
"Marine Camp Russ" untenable becomes ;
Another force hath march'd along main road
To rear of camp. and so defence benumbs.
From Dalny, siege-guns have been brought by rail
As near as safety would permit ; a stage
To be now traversed by besiegers stern,
Is long laborious work in warfare's page.
To make up batteries, mount the heavy guns,
‡To forward large supplies will be compell'd,
Indeed, before the *inner line* of forts
Can be at all approached, or even shell'd.
The "Fort Sixteen," on height, is captured too,
Of import great, this seems, in every way,
'Tis mark'd on map, on line of chief defence,
Involving others' fall, on early day.
Outlying forts on right-hand side, by rail,
(Which point to ancient capital quite straight),
By capture, Japanese can batteries plant
Within Port Arthur's range, at early date.
‡Against the Russian General so renown'd.

†Ammunition.

‡Kuropatkin.

Mikado's forces, for "advance" combine,
And fighting more or less severe ensues,
Along the hard-contested far drawn line.
Near Kaiping, movements great are taking place,
And eastward, close to Fenghwangcheng, as well,
A six-hour battle fought, with dire result
To Russian arms, when panic great befell.
All these events now point to sure advance,
Though slow, of armies Japanese, on strong
Positions Russ, near Haicheng forts, and town,
If foes succumb, to north must speed along.
A debt of gratitude the Japanese
Now owe, to one of England's naval sons,
To Captain Percy Scott, who lent "designs"
Of "carriage light" for hauling heavy guns.
Our skill'd allies, remember Boer War.
Of all its varied incidents took heed ;
For Ladysmith's defence the famous guns
Were brought from "Terrible," in hour of need.
O'er forty heavy guns at length were used,
In late South Afric War, through one man's aid,
His name is stamp'd on Britain's heart and brain
In deep-set colour, which will never fade !

25TH CANTO.

The Japanese have captured Kaiping Heights ;
For future struggle great, this paves the way,
Completing too in full, the war's *third phase* :
O'er weary path the smiles of fortune lay.

Consummate knowledge keen, in art of war,
Through progress past, our skill'd Allies have shown,
For crowning drama now we watch, and wait,
Spell-bound on Fortress doom'd, our gaze is thrown.
Strategical fine problems, Japanese
Have carried out, indeed, at date precise,
As prearranged ; and present crisis grave
May end the campaign's fortunes—so suffice.—
Heroic Japanese but mortal are
They cannot force at all the hand of fate,
Or march in one set groove without a swerve ;
The elements *again* may them belate.
But barring *this* our skill'd Allies have shown
More aptitude for calculations *near*,
Than that e'er made, in any war before ;
Port Arthur's fall predicting, *month of year*.
Achievements both on land and sea, all point
To *future aim* : first act, Corea held,
Port Arthur's isolation by blockade
The second phase, the forts of Kaiping fell'd.
Doom'd Fortress soon will fall, the fourth
Great act, of war, the fifth, would mean retreat
In full, of Kuropatkin's force, if in
Manchurian battle great, he meets defeat.
A conflict vast may not indeed take place :
The Russian General's plans prove incomplete,
Effect that follows false strategic moves
Directed from his Government's chief seat.
Results of four days' fighting now appear
When General Oku drove his foe from post
Of import great, the Russians then were swept

Throughout Peninsula, and far from coast.
A hundred miles, and more from Fortress great
Main Army Russ hath now been driven back,
Manchurian railway does not touch the sea ;
At Kaiping, foes from base no victuals lack.
A Japanese despatch is now at hand ;
†At dawn of day, 'neath screen of mist full dense,
The Army Russ made bold assault on pass ;
Quite two divisions detail'd for offence
On Mo-tien-ling, positions right and left
Were Heights commanding Pass on either side ;
The Army Japanese held these in strength ;
Against attack in force, did well provide.
At midnight, Russian troops approached the Height
Of Hsiao-ling, and outposts Japanese
Made fierce attack, when guards of this chief pass
At signal mass'd, with utmost speed and ease.
The Army Russ was routed at all points,
A furious fight ensued of four hours' length,
Pursued to Village, troops made *final stand*,
Till four in afternoon, with all their strength.
By recent news, it seems, the fight took place,
O'er front extending fifteen miles in all,
The force of Japanese engaged, 'tis said,
Was one brigade, and one battalion small.
Out-fought, out-Generall'd Army Russ hath been
At every point, throughout the whole campaign,
Famed Kuropatkin tried to break through web
In which entangled fully, he had lain.
Mikado's infantry surpass'd their foe,

† On July 16.

In every detail shown, resource display'd
In fullest sense, by every unit there ;
The fight was won through splendid marksmen's aid.
By Mo-tien-ling's most brilliant staunch defence
Against superior numbers Russ, 'tis clear
The Japanese have solved a question vex'd,
Their *fighting value* true, doth now appear.
As man to man, the Japanese *fight best*,
'Twas doubted whether men of their small race
Would not be overborne by *giant strength*,
In hand-to-hand encounter face to face.
The fifteen hours' fierce fight for mountain range,
Hath clearly proved which fighting race is *best*,
The Japanese show powers of brain, and nerve
The Russians lack, so fail in Tsar's behest.

26TH CANTO.

Emerging once again from prearranged
Delay, with all her force, Japan hath struck,
Victorious over Army Russ hath been ;
Success upon success hath gain'd with luck.
Result of these great actions of the war,
Newchang is occupied by Japanese,
The most important base, *this* soon will be,
As transports enter now with greatest ease.
With most tenacious grasp the Russians held
This treaty-port, its loss—to say the least—
May prove the greatest blow they have sustain'd
With loss of prestige, too, throughout the East.

The whole strategical position stands
 Involved, their presence *there* was outward sign
 Of occupation full of country round,
 Of all Manchurian lands through length of line.‡
 Administration, too, of Customs large,
 This port involves ; these dues, for years before
 The war, caused diplomatic questions grave,
 With countries wishing most the "open door."
 From General Oku comes a brief despatch ;
 "On date the twenty-fourth, our forces strong
 Began attack on foes at Ta-ping-ling
 On heights well posted, with defence works long.
 Our foemen's line extended quite ten miles,
 Their force consisted of a hundred guns,
 And five divisions full, took part in fight ;
 The range of hills from east to west, there runs.
 Our right wing reach'd the heights south-west, and
 then

A cannonade ensued ; our front made stay
 Till dark, against our foemen's murd'rous fire ;
 Through ground obstruction, our guns ne'er made
 play.

By ten at night, detachment of right wing,
 Dislodg'd the foe from many hills in sight
 Near Ta-ping-ling ; by well sustain'd attacks
 We captured all positions, that same night."
 The Army Japanese forced Russian troops
 To full retreat on Ta-shi-shao near,
 This close of day attack successful proved ;
 The Russians were pursued in flank and rear.

‡ The great Siberian Railway to Dalny.

The Army Takushan did not combine,
It now lies east of General Oku's force,
And moves north-west ; at Pauling, action won,
Which drove the Russians from projected course.
The Russian papers give a sad account
Of hardships borne in this ill-starr'd campaign
By Army Russ in vast Manchurian wilds,
Through trying downpour of torrential rain.
Most grievous seem effects of so much wet,
Deep mud, with heat intense, on health of Force ;
Consumption, too, of unripe growing fruit,
With Chinese cucumbers, on marching course.
War Correspondent tells a graphic tale :—
“ A roaring torrent deep, of yellow waves,
Comes rolling down the Liao mountain streams
With speed, and soon surrounding country laves.
To gain the Russian posts, one has to cross
Ten times these turbid streams with banks of mud ;
The Cossacks mounted, ford through each, in turn,
Their horses' haunches hid, through streams in flood.
Foot soldiers must undress, and rifles raise
Above their heads ; battalions of our men
Must climb the hills, though soaking wet to skin,
Completely spiritless, so worn out *then*.
The guns, the carts, light vehicles all sink
Quite fast in mud, and coated stiff with dirt
Are boots ; our uniforms are quite soak'd through,
And through, though close with waterproof begirt.
From saddles also gushing streams run down ;
With climate homicidal, heat so great
That sunstroke often strikes the wearied troops,

And also heat paralysis of late.
Men cannot drink the water from the streams,
So chiefly on hot tea they must depend ;
All vegetables harmful seem, that grow,
These, soldiers eat—to quench great thirst they tend—
Manchurian dirt is here worst thing by far,
Torrential rain brings slush and mud ; of late
Our gallant soldiers perish just like flies ;
No Russians fought ere now, 'mid ills so great."

27TH CANTO.

A Russian captive gives some details new :
When Kuropatkin took command, and lost
The battle Ta-shi-shao, fought so hard,
Two thousand strong succumb'd at Russia's cost ;
Two generals Russ were wounded sore, as well ;
The Japanese lost o'er one thousand men,
Their foemen captive took, in numbers large ;
And many trophies gain'd in struggle *then*.
War correspondents Russ most strongly dwell
Upon "mobility" of Japanese
All through the recent fight, and noted well
Their "concentration" with no rail to ease.
'Till orders for retreat were given out,
(As Japanese a turning movement made),
The Russians thought victorious they had been,
Positions did not yield, through gunners' aid.
The Russian troops now grumble at "retreats,"
The cause for which, they fail to comprehend ;

They *carry* wounded men o'er mountain tracks;
With failing strength some walk to journey's end.
A Berlin student sends some news of mark :—
("Kuroki's relative—a kinsman near)—
He says the General's father was a Pole
"Kurowski" named,—alike both "crests" appear.†
Of noble lineage, too, of ancient race,
Who fled from Russia's fierce oppression, soon
In Revolution great of native land ;
And found a refuge in Japan, a boon.
He married then a lady Japanese ;
The General's Father on his death-bed spake,
"For Russia's flagrant treatment of the Poles,
I hope my son, one day, will *vengeance take*."
Of most revolting conduct now one hears,
Maltreatment gross by boorish Russian troops,
Of gallant foes, the wounded Japanese ;
To ruthless deeds the Russian soldier stoops.
Officials Russ tyrannic, rule with lash,
Siberian mine, is grave to hope of life ;
Through Russian realm corruption reigns uncheck'd,
As cauldron seethes, with elements of strife.
The Secret Service Agents terror cause ;
Unrest, deep-seated, lies throughout the land ;
With grave disasters, too, of needless war ;
A great "upheaval" may be near at hand.

Important news from far Chefoo arrives :—
Upon Port Arthur's fortress, doom'd to fall,

† Of both families,

The belt of steel and fire is closing in,
Mikado's guns on heights must now appal.
A silence deep surrounds ill-omen'd spot,
'Tis only from a fugitive some facts
Are brought, its "fate" to outer world remains
Unknown, the climax grand, of war's stern acts.
For one brief moment were the pall to lift,
The world electrified, spell-bound would be,
No more weird picture ever stood, of war,
Than *this*, if scene dramatic we might see.
Assault upon Port Arthur hath begun;
The outer works the Japanese will gain;
The fortress too, in death-throes now must be,
Defenders feeling agonies of pain.
Prepared to lose some thirty thousand men,
The Japanese with stern resolve proceed,
Essay to break through *inner works* of fort:
Titanic task—to prove historic deed!
A Newchang agent in a letter home,
Now states, "I met a Russian Soldier here,
Who said, 'The feeling in the Army Russ,
Is not o'er patriotic far, or near.
The men care not one straw for warfare's cause,
Like beasts of burden, officers will treat
Them oft, with lash, will spur and drive them on;
In deadly climate, ill-winds seem to meet.
The food is insufficient, pay is poor.'
He then said, 'How can you expect a man
To give his life and strength for Tsar, and State,
When all things serve to place him under ban?
The Japanese, well officer'd, well fed,

Well paid, are better soldiers, rank and file ;
Their guns, again, can far out-match our own ;
In fight our men seek cover, aye, erstwhile.
More anxious skin to save, than foes to fight.
This well-read soldier (adds the writer then),
Takes gloomy view of all things, great or small,
But this expresses feeling of the men."
Japan possess'd one overmastering thought,
By Statesmen, people, Army Fleet held still,
To capture fortress so renown'd, *once more* ;
And hoist the "Sun Flag" high o'er Golden Hill.

28TH CANTO.

Japan victorious ever doth advance ;
Her foes vacating Hai-ching since reverse,
And Kuropatkin owns to sure defeat ;
His plans frustrated by all methods terse.
Disasters grave he cannot now retrieve
In this Campaign, the time indeed is passed ;
To well effect an orderly retreat
To North, his only hope to hasten fast,
Evacuation now of Hai-ching strong,
Position chosen with the utmost care
By Russian Chief, doth stand on other plane
To port, and town of Neuchang of ill-fare,
A place by nature strong and safe to hold
Made stronger still by art, a fortress great,
From Liao-yang is distant forty miles ;
Of Russian centre, Post Advance did rate,
The General made a grave mistake again

When he allow'd a range of hills to go,
And Pass of Mo-tien-ling so strong, to fall,
Without a struggle scarce, with valiant foe.
This error soon was realised in full,
A poor attempt was made once more to gain
The Pass, but this recapture fail'd complete ;
Kuroki made advance on Army main.
And drove the Russians from positions held
South-west of Hai-ching, after fights severe,
Who lost four thousand men—some half were slain—
Those wounded sore, to rail, retreating near.†
The Japanese victorious own'd to loss
Of full a thousand men, 'mid this grim strife ;
The fight of Tomu-ching drove Russians back
On Hai-ching near, again with loss of life.
This Russian General hath a battle still
To win, not one stray gleam of sunshine cheers
Him o'er his path, in vast appalling task,
He took in hand, expressing full his fears,
He ever meets rebuffs, not all from foes,
From jealous rivals, counsels often mix'd,
And interference great, from Petersburg,
On all sides hamper'd, with *his rule ne'er fix'd*,
Brave General Oku states in late despatch :—
“ My line extends in full from Neuchang low,
The ancient Chinese town, to Hai-ching near :
My troops are pressing on retreating foe.”
A Russian Army even in retreat,
Is not at all a foe to be despised,
Though rear-guard actions, fought in style of old,

† To reach the hospital train.

Are badly led, and often ill-advised.
The Russian soldiers aye tenacious cling
To Posts, in face of deadly, bold assault ;
So Russian valour, meed of praise deserves
Although their Chiefs may be so oft in fault.
A recent telegram from Neuchang states:—
Mikado's gunboats light, now speed their best
Up river, some two hundred miles afar,
To intercept retreat of Foe to West.
At Petersburg, and Liao-yang, 'tis said,
That General Kuropatkin means to fight,
And make *determin'd stand* at last named spot,
A battle fought, at length, with main, and
might,
The Russian outposts now are twenty miles
From Liao-yang, a point where Armies meet
Of gallant Japanese in fullest force.
To Mukden now, the Russians may retreat.
They lost one thousand men at Yu-shu-ling
Three regiments in a defile then were caught,
As if in "battue" slain, so mass'd were they,
Not in accustom'd lines, was battle fought.
At Hai-ching, Russians all their stores destroy'd
They left in haste so great, with transport poor ;
Mikado's gunboats back down river sped,
And fired on *scuttled gunboat*, to make sure.
The curtain lifts around Port Arthur now,
On grim events, lets in a lurid light,
The Japanese bombard from White Wolf Hill,
The town, the docks, the warships with their
might.

On new gain'd height, the Japanese have now,
Some sixty heavy guns, laid strong in place ;
They slowly, surely tighten now the noose
Around the mighty fortress, famed for space.

29TH CANTO.

The Russian Fleet from harbour soon emerged,
When shells from White Wolf Hill much havoc
wrought,
The Japanese obtaining range exact ;
To reach Port Vladivostock ships then sought.
The " Fighting Admiral " was on the watch,
He met his foes, and scatter'd them afar ;
As battle force their Fleet is now destroy'd
Its further progress he will surely bar.
A naval fight without a pause ensued ;
The Japanese attack'd with their whole Fleet ;
From Port the Russian ships proceeded south,
Then Togo steam'd away his foes to meet.
Till Sundown, fighting lasted most severe ;
The Russian fire had weaken'd near the close,
In manner notable to high degree ;
Confusion in formation then arose ;
The ships dispers'd, with cruisers two—or more—
And some destroyers, southward fled with speed,
Some steam'd to neutral ports, and all the rest
Retreated back to harbour in their need.
Swift cruiser Askold, Novik, too (patched up),
Have something like great pace of old display'd ;
With gallant dash they reach'd Port Kiao-chau,

In German waters, there to be up-laid,
To be dismantled, by the rules of war ;
'Tis said, they wished to chance another chase ;
And were engaged in taking in supplies ;
Once more to try and join Skrydloff at Base.
So gallant Togo now must watch *two ports*
Instead of *one*, in most efficient way,
To keep these vessels close to neutral shore,
And mask the entrance wide of Kin-chau Bay.
At previous date, torpedo fleet attack'd
The Russian squadron of destroyers large,
Which sallied forth from Arthur's Port, but soon
Returned, and left "one boat" in foemen's charge.
Of blows terrific dealt to sea power Russ,
Some fuller details now have come to hand,
Destruction great of warships hot engaged
In recent battles when obliged to stand.
While cruising up and down Tsu-shi-ma Straits,
Which quite divide Corea from Japan ;
Brave Kamimura met the squadron Russ
From Vladivostock, Borik leading van.
He then attack'd and after five hours' fight,
The cruiser Rurik sank, the other two
Swift Russian ships, though damaged steam'd away,
To north, the Gromoboi and Rossia flew.
Mikado's Fleet slight damaged hath sustain'd
The Russian squadron through the straits came
down
To join Port Arthur's ships that might escape ;
No smile of Fortune met, but sternest frown.
Through this assured success the Japanese

Now hold supreme command in Eastern sea,
The Russian naval power is ruined quite,
No fleet of strength whate'er now left will be.
The last intelligence confirms belief,
That warfare waged alike on sea and land,
Is over quite on sea, *beyond recall*.
Important news from Kiao-chau at hand—
Germania hath decreed to firm abide
By neutral law, as heretofore ordain'd :
The Russian vessels are to be disarm'd ;
From crews disbanded promise will be gain'd,
To fight no more while this fierce struggle lasts ;
A point the neutral Powers hold firm in view ;
It rests with Tsar to give assured assent ;
Who hopes to build his naval force anew.
Mikado's Admiral sends late despatch :
“ In Straits, we saw three ships at break of day ;
On sighting us, they made direct for North ;
We then gave chase, and fought without delay.”
At length an Heir is born to Russian throne,
Amid deep gloom of war, disasters grave ;
At time of sortie by the Russian Fleet
From fortress doom'd, itself, from ills to save.
In superstitious, fatalistic race ;
Religious fervour's raised to heights sublime ;
This *great event* may speak as voice of God,
And peace inspire, stay treason's hand in time.

30TH CANTO.

Announcement comes from scene of war Far East,
That, in Mikado's name, his Marshal famed
To Russian General in beleaguer'd Port
Proposal made :—to save more bloodshed aim'd—
That Eastern fortress should surrender make,
Great citadel renown'd throughout the East,
Non-combatants to be allow'd to quit ;
And troops to sally forth 'neath arms at least,
And pass "Kinchau Positions," without stay,
Or hindrance in the act, and so unite
With Kuropatkin's force, now far away.
The Russians *then* would run no risk of fight.
All citizens who might protection wish
From Dai Nippon, would onward then be sent
At *Her expense*, to any place they wish'd,
Ere Town and Forts by fire and steel were rent.
Port Arthur, Russians, in exchange, must leave
Intact, deliver up all ships in Port.
The Russian General thus replied, "We mean
To fight, till not one man remains in Fort."
As *now* the Emperor of Dai Nippon
Hath made demand of striking, startling kind,
Submission full of greatest Fortress own'd
By Russian Tsar, scarce parallel we find.
This stately, ominous demand stands forth
As episode dramatic in extreme,
The change in great historical events
In vivid colours stamps the year's long stream.
The Sovereign great of Asiatic race

Declares "Imperial Will" should be made known
To hard-press'd, hopeless soldiers of the Tsar ;
But chivalrous kind feeling mark'd is shown.
The Japanese, throughout this struggle fierce,
Have earn'd great praise for conduct most humane,
On all occasions generous to foes,
To captives ever courteous, urbane.
By every Power this "summons" is approved,
The Japanese for *honour* pave a way,
To shed their blood like water are prepared,
But wish to save effusion, if they may.
Large herds of cattle Japanese now drive
O'er huge mine-fields, which Russians laid with
care ;
These, foemen capture, thus augment their food,
For meat is precious, so is banquet rare.
A German Correspondent makes some notes
Upon artillery fire by Japanese,
Who show astounding vigour on all sides,
And gives an instance, pointing fact with ease.
A Russian battery strong, with six score men,
Eight guns, for minutes ten exposed did lay ;
At end of time the guns had been destroyed,
Ten men remain d—still ready to obey.
The *moral* ill-effects, men feel by this
Terrific fire, are past all power of speech,
When distant even, troops get quite unnerved,
Seem paralysed by awful sounds, that reach
Their ears, impressing minds with wild dismay,
The powerful, crushing, screaming, whizzing noise,
Incessant burst of flame, 'mid cloud of smoke ;

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No martial spirit *then* the Russian buoys.
There seems some great delay in bringing up
The wounded men from Front to line of rail ;
'Tis said, one quarter of the wounds produced,
Is caused by raking shells, that pelt like hail.
This power is clearly shown by numbers slain,
The wounds severe are nearly fatal all,
But those from rifle bullets oft are slight,
And men recover ill, which thus befall.
When Russian soldiers through a village pass,
They catch up trifles without thought, or care,
Fowls, ducks, and geese with forage disappear ;
The Chinese scarcely relish such ill-fare.
‡A correspondent tells of clever ruse,—
A farmer told the tale with keenest glee ;—
Some Russians bagg'd a pig for their huge pot,
To make a jovial feast they did agree.
Half-famish'd they sat round the festive board,
Up rush'd a peasant with a startled face,
Who cried, " The Japs in force are on us near !"
Then Cossacks gallôp'd off at breakneck pace.

31ST CANTO.

Again disasters dog the Russian Fleet,
The gallant " Novik " now hath run her race,
Esteem'd as cruiser fast throughout the world
(For twenty-five full knots was steaming pace),
The only Russian vessel, that escaped

‡ Mr R. J. MacHugh.

From far-famed "Togo's" squadron after fight
In latest moment foil'd in bold attempt
*To reach the Eastern Base by speedy flight.
Attack'd, and wreck'd on wild Saghalien shores,
Best handled ship in Tsar's whole fleet was she,
Throughout the war an honour'd name hath won,
Her fine career now closed by Fate's decree.
The Itzshan Fort Port Arthur doth command,
'Tis in besiegers' hands—so says report—
Which pours a hail of shells on ill-starr'd Town,
"Defences main" are pierced by captured Fort.
Three thousand shells have fallen in three days ;
The Japanese are slowly pushing back
Defenders brave ; the final struggle fierce
Cannot be long delay'd with fire, and sack.
The Russian battleship Sevastopol
Outside Port Arthur struck a mine full low,
Submerged, while firing on Mikado's Fleet,
Return'd to Port, by steamer brought in tow.
West Coast of whole Peninsula is seized,
And firmly held by dauntless Japanese,
The ships in Harbour now are raked by shell ;
But junks when search'd, can leave the Port with
ease.

Another Fort is taken, Number Five ;
So step by step besiegers gain on Port ;
At cost of over seven thousand lives ;
A task of magnitude was captured Fort.
Expenditure of ammunition great
Is met by Japanese at Dalny Base

* Vladivostock.

With railway running close to Fortress now,
Providing prompt supplies in every case.
Defenders must have been obliged to save
For moments critical, their shot and shell,
This dearth is shown in progress of the siege;
In cost of life this fact must surely tell.
Two fine Destroyers Russ have struck on mines;
One sank, the other into Harbour fled;
Five Clearing Steamers quick were on the scene,
But these together back to Port soon sped.
From Chinese merchants news at length is
brought,

They state the troops in trenches work'd knee deep
In mud, through eight days' heavy rain just past;
Their quarters oft ablaze, 'mid ruins' heap.
Within Port Arthur food is scarce and dear,
Civilians live in bomb-proof huts at hand,
When Japanese succeed, and enter Town,
†In "Chosen Fort" the Russians will make stand
Soon after capture fine of Itzshan Fort,
And Number Five, the Japanese next day
At dawn then occupied "Parade," which lies
Within the Forts; effecting sure their stay.
And from this point increasing fire is swept,
A storm throughout the live-long day, in fact
Upon the town and busy Dockyards near,
These all are well within the range *exact*.
A dozen strongest Forts remain as yet
Uncaptured, each well arm'd, well mann'd as well;
To carry all the Forts "en bloc" could not

† The name.

Be done, except by superstitious spell.‡
At end of rainy season, Japanese
Decided operations wide on land
Should on the twenty-fourth of present month
Commence : as follows, thus their forces stand.
Divisions five on right, in centre three,
On left are two, which make a total great
Of quite two hundred thousand men in all,
These soon in face of foes will risk their fate.
Artillery duel fierce first day took place,
Maintaining action sole,—effects not shown—
Next morn the “grand attack” commenced in full,
The battle still proceeds—results unknown.
From Correspondents comes again fresh news :—
In truth, most ominous for Russian side ;
Through four days’ fighting troops were sorely
press’d,
Retreating in remorseless battle’s tide,
On Liao-yang, now slowly driven in ;
Contesting every inch of ground *in vain*
With stubborn valour fight for dearest life.
But Japanese the City sure will gain.
Their armies are on three sides closing in,
A fierce attack from Liao River too
Expected soon, a flanking force sent up
This great highway, the combat to renew.

‡ The Russians believe their foes carry wizard stones.

32ND CANTO.

The great Manchurian struggle still proceeds.
From Dai Nippon comes news of slow retreat,
Which follow'd Anping's serious three days' fight,
When Russians met with well assured defeat.
Quite half a million combatants engaged ;
So large a force ne'er met since dark age past. †
The war's great climax seems approaching near :
The awe-struck world awaits *dénouement* last.
A semi-circle great the Russians form'd,
(Like MacMahon's large force at grim Sedan),
And facing East, a good ten miles in all
This circuit swept—no more disastrous plan.
At rear the railway ran, in centre stood
The city Liao-yang; a river fine
The Tai-tse named, great crescent did bisect :
The Japanese assaulted this long line.
The gallant Islanders had spent one day
In finding Posts assign'd, for fierce onslaught ;
At dawn, the batteries mass'd quite shook the hills,
Twelve hundred guns boom'd forth and havoc
wrought.
From five till nine a shower of shrapnel fell,
White smoke from bursting shells, one plain could
see,
Against the foliage dark on mountain side :
The duel awe inspired to high degree.
The Japanese then fired on *squares of land*,

† In Battle of all Nations, "Leipsic," the number of
combatants never reached 500,000.

Mass'd guns to given spot attention paid,
With great precision work'd from right to left,
Quite search'd the Russian front by cannonade.
The Infantry's attack was well prepared
By this Artillery fire through line's whole length,
‡No living man before had seen or heard
Bombardment so tremendous in its strength.
The heights round Liao-yang were all ablaze
With flashing lights, dispersing morning gloom ;
Far-ranging rifle fire was heard quite clear,
Above the mighty roar of cannon's boom.
For leagues the plan of Japanese advance
Could be observed, as columns so immense
From hour to hour push'd on their slow approach,
Through thinly wooded landscape—never dense.
Chinese, on flat-roof'd houses gathering fast,
Within the city's four square walls were seen
To watch *tremendous struggle* then in course,
Which life, or death to *one* at least must mean.
Anshan, with five immense redoubts, was chief
Defensive work round Liao-yang's steep brow,
Believed impregnable by Russian force
For true direct assault—vacated now.
The Japanese made flank attacks, and thus
Manœuvred Russians out of this strong post,
Without the loss of one high valued life,
To great dismay of Tsar's great martial Host.
In Chino-Japanese late war—ten years
Ago—Anshan, most northern point attain'd
By great victorious Army of Japan,

‡ Colonel Gädke.

Was goal *then* sought, the strong position gain'd.
§The Russians lost at Anshan eight siege guns,
At An-ping eight, with heavy loss of life ;
Reports are varied as to thousands slain,
May-hap 'tis twelve, each side, in three days' strife.
Renown'd Oyama's purpose seems to be
To circle round his foes, and not to throw
Them merely back to North, his aim appears
Destruction full, in one fell, sudden blow.
Napoleon's method was his foes to dash
To pieces by momentum of attack,
Quite unexpected, brilliant to degree ;
To capture armies *whole*, Great Moltke's knack.
Low heights defending Liao-yang due South
The Japanese had fail'd to take by night,
At ten, the strife went on from dawn of day ;
All fierce assaults repulsed by stubborn might
In last, long, weary hour of this grim day
The very inmost spirit stood reveal'd
Of this heroic people unsurpass'd ;
By swift manoeuvre fate of battle seal'd.
At ten at night, they made one more attack,
When weary Russians thought the strain was o'er,
Till midnight deadly combat fierce ensued,
Then soldiers Russ fell back, defeated sore.
Oyama had determin'd to decide
At once the trembling balance of the fight ;
Of life regardless, flung his troops against

§ Sixteen ten-centimetre guns captured at An-ping, and
An-shan.

The heights of steep Shan-shan with main and
might.

The combat proved decisive soon next morn,
(This well-fought battle, *drawn* on previous day)
For Kuropatkin's line at length was pierced,
On which he risked his fate, and stood at bay.

33RD CANTO.

LIAO-YANG.

The awe-inspiring drama still proceeds,
It stirs the inmost fibres of one's heart,
'Tis mark'd throughout by grand heroic deeds,
For soldiers slain perform'd stern duty's part.
Effects of modern war appalling seem ;
In fierce contested struggle, one short week,
The death-roll mounts to heights ere now unknown,
Of sixty thousand men doth rumour speak.
Endurance great was reach'd to limit's point.
By gallant soldiers, in those fateful days,
By combatants alike ; for water good,
Or food, were not obtain'd in well known ways ;
For days they fought, while thirst and hunger
gripp'd,
And bravely met their foes, no rest they sought.
By length of combat, strength of force engaged,
This battle ranks as one of greatest fought.
The Japanese abandon'd *front* attack,
For *flank*, at end of six days' fiercest fight ;
The citadel, and town of Liao-yang

At last, Oyama occupied with height ;
Balloons had aided much the Russian fire,
The foemen's batteries, well did they locate ;
In falling back the Russians were compell'd
To leave siege guns behind—though spiked—to tate.
On railway station some of these were turn'd
By foes, whose shells before had reach'd this spot ;
The business part of city was aflame :
To find vast stores was next the captors' lot.
Dull strategist, but still tactician good,
Is Kuropatkin, who escaped to " mines
Yentai," from Liao-yang ; these great coal-fields
Manchurian railway feed, and branching lines.
It seems the General reach'd Yentai before
Kuroki could dash on to seize the place ;
The latter cross'd the river in the rear
Of Kuropatkin, who for " mines " did race.
Of vital consequence to Russia now
In working railway still, are these coal-fields
The only mines in all Manchuria north ;
Unbounded strength, in fact, possession yields.
Four days Kuroki met resistance strong,
On hills due west of village Hsi-yin-tai,
And only after fierce assaults prevailed ;
Foes, Northern road kept open, by *delay*.
Oyama doth announce some Russian force
As yet due South of priceless Yentai lies ;
(Kuroki keeps this ever well in touch ;)
In full retreat main force to Mukden flies.
A point is reach'd, where masses, that survive
Of Russian Army, now may make a stand,

And rally once again for effort great,
To stay advance of Island forces grand.
No estimate from Tokio hath yet
Appear'd, of captured prisoners, and guns ;
The loss of life must onward progress stay
Awhile of Nippon's skill'd, victorious sons.
Oyama's ranks can soon be reinforced,
Can offer battle then to stubborn foes,
For Kuropatkin paused in *mid-retreat* ;
At Tiehling strong, he hoped to come to blows.
His rear-guard stretches south of River Hun,
And fiercely fights, in truth, for dearest life ;
From West, and East, the Japanese close in,
Upon the line of rail, 'mid endless strife.
These rear-guards prove the bravest of the brave ;
One, onset full sustain'd for two whole days
Of "grand assault " to cover well retreat
From Liao-yang, and open kept high-ways.
A rear-guard covers passage o'er the bridge ;
This gallant force is given up as lost.
If Russians cross the River Hun in time,
They may give *check*, although at heavy cost.
'Tis said Kuroki hath not cross'd the Hun,
But now advances close to strong Tie-ling,
Another flanking movement thus will try,
Ere armies mass'd on Russians seeks to fling.
Dynastic capital of China waits,
There's pause ere ancient Manchu city falls
Before victorious armies of Japan :
The Russian flag still waves o'er Mukden's walls !

34TH CANTO.

Mysterious silence reign'd complete for days,
O'er Liao-yang's great battle now just passed ;
From " lines " war correspondents have escaped,
And light is struck with graphic facts at last.
We now can glean the truth of combat great,
Of struggle waged tremendous in its force,
With desperation fought by all engaged,
We learn from Japanese, and Russian source.
The story thus reveal'd will never fade,
While human recollection doth endure ;
On mind, and heart impression leaves profound ;
Such martial feats to thoughts of race allure.
In mortal strife are pitted nations strong,
Ye people weak, and unprepared, take heed,
For war's conditions now are changed in full,
More stern, and ruthless have become indeed.
In recent battle lessons have been taught,
The Japanese, and Russians both supreme
Contempt of death, self-sacrifice have shown,
Past martial annals tell no grander theme.
A serious war like this appals the mind ;
Beyond conception cruel to degree
For many generations still, alas !
War-trial must endure, and faced must be.
In truth, grim war should aye avoided be,
Consistent with a nation's honour true ;
When utmost diplomatic efforts fail,
In vital case must sword be drawn in lieu.
And then, in grave arbitrament of arms,

A nation's heart, and spirit loud must speak,
The "people's will" with ardour be proclaim'd,
Imperial interests all should surely seek,
With full resource of fibre, brain, and nerve,
A people great must hold themselves prepared;
War aspects differ now at every point;
To hold "sea power" no effort should be spared.

Mikado's splendid force on land excels
In organising strength beyond compare,
Its leadership aye shows a master-hand,
With careful, studied strategy most rare.
Of Liao-yang's great battle, facts we learn;
A low round hill, call'd "Hay-yen-tai," made
strong,*

Of Russian post was "key," its grassy slopes
Were scene of deadly contest fierce and long.
Kuroki's flank attack did then depend
Upon possession sure of Hay-yen-tai,
To gain this point entrench'd the General sought,
And so, for night attack, shrewd plans did lay.
The central great division valiant, strong,
At dawn, upon September's second day,
Advanced, and after struggle, carried post
At point of bayonet—deem'd surest way.
With morning light it proved the Russians' turn
For hours to shell the hill, a perfect hail
Of shrapnel raked its naked slopes, and top;
Undaunted, Nippon's sons ne'er flinch, nor fail.

* Well-fortified.

They, like grim death hold on ; both sides alike
Had firm resolved the day before, on night
Attacks, to try regain the bloody slopes
Of hill, the Russians hoped, ere broad daylight.
The Japanese to capture battery Russ
Had sought, which made good play the day before,
But neither venture won the end in view ;
Each side with valour fought through trial sore.
The Russians almost gain'd hill's summit round
When they were swept by Japanese attack
Of bayonet, and bullet true, they then
Gave up the struggle fierce, retreating back.
For two days more the conflict still went on,
Until the Russian full retreat set in,
With most appalling losses on each side,
And men sore smitten lay 'mid strife, and din.
A correspondent view'd the stricken field
Next morn ; a scene more weird, could ne'er well be,
For dead by hundreds there unburied lay,
The grassy slopes, for blood, he scarce could see.
The whole low hill was litter'd far and near
With broken implements of war, and dress,
Equipment varied ; but the grimmest sight
Was twisted bayonets, through battle stress,
And stain'd with blood these lay about in heaps ;
To oust the Russians from their vantage post
Took full six days of fiercest strife, and then
Triumphant proved Mikado's valiant host.

35TH CANTO.

Port Arthur's siege, of world-wide interest keen,
Eclipsed by struggle so supreme of late
Between main armies in the distant North,
Hath been revived by acts of recent date.
In bright Electra's era, darkness broods
O'er greatest martial feat of modern age,
Mysterious silence reigns in truth complete.
No ray of light on great dramatic page.
We glean some slight, misleading, scrappy news
From Russian source, but none from Japanese,
Regarding this decisive drama great,
We watch and wait, but patience often flees.
The scene of tragic combat so intense,
Completely isolated now hath been,
In truth, for many months from human ken,
No like event, since darkest ages, seen.
From Petersburg a startling rumour comes ;
The Tsar a private message hath received,
That agonising hours of Port approach ;
No chance appears that Fort will be relieved.
'Tis said that food supplies are growing scarce ;
While varied ammunition now runs low ;
The Russians use black powder, not o'er good ;
With ancient Chinese shells they make a show,
Filed down to suit the size of Russian guns.
Of treasure trove, the Tsar hath heard with zest ;
Krupp cannon lost, and buried in last war ;
But this may be a myth like all the rest.
Port Arthur's fate, in time, is doubtless sealed,

Her forces unrelieved must perish all,
In truth beyond all succour far, or near ;
By fierce assault may not be doomed to fall.
The Japanese are concentrating strength
Again to strike two blows at self-same date ;
Great fortress, point objective, furthest south,
And Mukden north, will now be sport of fate.
From waiting interval, which hath ensued,
Mikado's armies now once more emerge,
With stern resolve, and plans somewhat revised ;
Fresh troops from Newchwang onward duly surge,
To fill Oyama's much depleted ranks,
A hundred thousand men at Dalny wait,
For fresh advance, in turning movement sought,
In battle looming forth at early date.
Kuroki now advances east ; to turn
Right flank of Russian force Nodzu will try,
With General Oku in support ; and fights
For Passes oft ensue, as foes draw nigh.
Kuroki now hath cross'd the River Hun
With his whole force, and covers *thus*, in strength,
Entire left flank of Russian Army main,
Near Tie-ling's strong entrenchments miles in length.
But this report may not in fact be true,
Official news comes in, that contests near
The River Hun, where range of highlands run,
Now oft take place—but outpost fighting mere.
'Tis thought the Japanese the methods still
Pursue, which hitherto have served so well,
Of making roads o'er trackless mountain range,
Where heavy guns can pass through height or dell,

And ammunition carts, with baggage trains,
For armies' vast supply in battle need ;
Accumulation vast of stores at hand
They lay, ere seeking battle take good heed.
Reports of Fortress doom'd come in, confirmed ;
Fierce fighting hath ensued for many days,
The Japanese have gain'd positions strong,
Fresh troops assault, in constant, full relays,
But General Stössel hath recaptured one ;
Some forty-five siege guns have been destroy'd,
But by defenders, or their foes, is yet
Unknown : Mikado's Fleet was full employ'd,
But check'd—'tis said—by fire from Golden Hill.
The brave Commandant's loved heroic wife
Hath now been wounded sore in duty's path,
In tending stricken men, and saving life,
Devoted head of train'd courageous band
Of nurses in far Eastern Fortress great ;
The honour'd roll-call shows five hundred names
Of noble workers 'mid ill strokes of fate.

36TH CANTO.

From source Chinese despatch at hand asserts,
That forts, around the stricken Fortress vast,
At length are falling slowly one by one ;
The Japanese push trenches close at last,
To good positions, whence they can command
The town's wide open roadways now entire,
Brave Stössel calls on wearied men to " hold
The forts, 'till they with their last breath expire."

Port Arthur's hero comes of martial stock,
A Russian pure and simple, so 'tis thought,
An ancestor was famed for deeds in war,
Renown'd as hero, whom Napoleon fought.
By strange devices Russians try to daunt
The gallant Islanders from time to time,
From top of ramparts cast down stones, and
"beans," †

To injure eyesight, also throw hot lime.
The city's now enclosed in belt of fire ;
A fort just seized commands the Water Lake
There still are springs within the fortress walls ;
Condensing efforts too defenders make.
But coal runs low, there seems no chance of fresh
Supply (for fuel Russians now use wood) ;
Beyond Yentai, as coal mines there are seized
By foes, who find the "plant" of little good.
At Mukden Kuropatkin now prepares
To make a stand, with wide entrenchments strong,
He occupies north bank of River Hun,
Three hundred guns defend position long.
A foreign resident in ancient town
Sends grave reports of social matters there,
The country round is now a vast arm'd camp,
Well timber'd, fertile land is sterile, bare.
The standing crops of millet are destroy'd,
Or used for feeding horses, all cut grain
Hath now been seized, and wood for fuel burned,
Doors, windows, houses too, the troops obtain.
Appalling seems the ruin cast around,

† Baked into hard cakes.

To picture thrifty natives' great distress
Surpasses power of speech, or pen to tell,
For famine gaunt approaches more or less.
'Tis stated, Kuropatkin's army main
Is equal now in number to his foes,'
A quarter million men he doth command,
Eight hundred guns he can at will dispose.
The Japanese have same amount of men ;
With full a thousand guns can make good play ;
Disease ‡ is making ravage sore, immense ;
To fill up wastage, troops arrive each day.
The sick and wounded soldiers in Japan,
By muster roll, show thousands forty-five,
The three large hospitals contain two-thirds ;
At mountain health resort the rest arrive.
The system there in force, deserves high praise
For way of treating life's sad ebb and flow,
And handling sorely stricken men so well ;
The death rate stands exceptionally low.
Mikado's Army will be reinforced,
By much extended service now of all
The conscripts with the colours in Japan ;
While Russia on reservists still doth call.
The Tsar doth now the Viceroy§ supersede
In his supreme command of Realm far East,
His gross miscalculations, as to strength
Of Island Power, urged on the war, at least,
Involving Russia in disastrous first
Campaign, *aggression* her sole end and aim,

‡ Beri-beri and dysentery.

§ Admiral Alexeieff.

Supreme position held, with quite free hand,
He thus will surely bear main part of blame,
When chief command is held by one who, right
Or wrong, in "public mind" connected seems
With grave defeat, with policy o'er bad,
A "scapegoat" must be made it surely deems.
To Admiral, so much abused, we must
For splendid work give ample credit due ;
At least one thing he did with utmost skill ;
Port Arthur fortified right well, and true.
Sevastopol by Todleben was plann'd ;
This Fortress seems with equal skill made strong ;
We hear of fierce assaults, through many days,
Repulsed by means of vast defences long.

37TH CANTO.

Port Arthur still holds out, no answer comes
To question vex'd of problematic form,
Which time alone will solve in course of siege,
Can modern fortress now be won by storm ?
To illustrate this deadly conflict grim,
The Russians made a sortie great in force
Against position held by Japanese ;
Four thousand men succumb'd in fighting course.
†On Volunteers famed Stössel call'd forthwith
To try regain "High Hill," which foes had gained,
The brave defenders answer'd him with verve,
By patient fortitude the Hill attain'd ;
So fort on fort are thus at length won back

†Russian Account.

By Russians, with great slaughter on each side ;
In hard earn'd posts besiegers stand exposed
To murd'rous fire, so cannot firm abide.
Brave Stossel estimates the loss of foes,
In late assaults, at quite ten thousand men ;
He owns the water reservoirs were seized
In course of fight, destroy'd completely then.
Port Arthur's " key " from north is styled High Hill ;
On brow the earthworks now are ruin'd quite ;
The Japanese were unprotected thus ;
In each advance were ever full in sight,
As they in swarms reel'd up the steep hillside,
As men fell down, then others took their place,
O'er bodies leapt like agile mountaineers,
With gleaming bayonets did foemen face.
From heights, machine grim guns were surely
train'd
Upon these daring men, who storm'd the Hill ;
Alas ! oft swept away the living mass !
Undaunted ever, heroes climb'd up still.
A Russian journal give a grim account .
Of visit paid to gruesome battlefield,
Where wounded men yet lay in blazing sun
'Mid swarms of flies, with no protecting shield.
The writer said he knew of vultures' flight
Across a stricken field with vision keen,
But ne'er beheld such hordes of insect life,
Such ghastly form of torment felt and seen.
These flies swept on in dread embattled hosts,
And form'd black patches in transparent air ;
A wounded officer gave plaintive cry :

"For mercy's sake don't leave me in the lair."
To Russian captives Japanese are kind,
In sacred temples, house them through the land;
Without their foot-gear—this in sorry plight—
New outer garments clean are close at hand.
House duties they attend to all alone;
Their heart strings round the "Ikon" aye entwine;
The Japanese, on kindly thought intent,
Bring floral gifts to set off tiny shrine.
The captive's boots are in a wretched state,
Sometimes, indeed, without a sole or heel,
Forced marches o'er bad stony roads tell tales;
Torn overcoats point out the ill men feel,
While camping out beneath the open sky,
Or in some muddy pits, or trenches low,
Half fill'd with water, oft, in fact, knee deep,
When drenching rain hath caused an overflow.
The flower courtship of Japan is sweet;
When love-lorn swain doth woo a damsel fair,
He puts a flowering plant on window-sill;
Seeks far and wide for blossoms rich and rare.
Should charming maiden favour then his suit,
She tends the plant with anxious loving care;
But if proposal she would firm reject,
The flower neglected, dies, looks wither'd, bare.
The Chunchuse chief, the noted Chin-su-san,
Declares ten thousand brigands are engaged,
Bold hardy men with modern arms equipped,
In active raids due North, in warfare waged.
Commanded by a clever Japanese
They captured Russian bullion-chest of late,

En route for Mukden, sent for safe resort ;
For scouting purpose now their aid is great.
An armistice the Russians granted full
§To bury dead in one sad day's brief spell.
When troops encounter'd ghastly birds of prey
Ere ending gruesome task, as evening fell.
Again 'tis said no truce would Russians grant ;
The dead still lie without the city walls ;
Within, enteric fever spreads around ;
And dread of epidemic now appals.

38TH CANTO.

A storm hath raged along the Chinese coast,
Frustrating sortie by Port Arthur's fleet ;
Four Russian warships have been sorely hit
By Japanese skill'd gunners' practised feat.
'Tis said that one hath been completely wreck'd ;
The names of damaged ships are not yet known ;
The Russian Staff communicate with Port
Through wireless telegraph, to Chefoo thrown.
With grim ferocity the fights proceed,
Repeated fierce attacks are hard sustained,
When neither side gives quarter, 'tis affirm'd,
And wounded perish, as scarce aid is gain'd.
From Russian source 'tis stated, in assault
On strong Koumeer redoubt, on rocky steep,
The Ninth Division Japanese was quite
Destroy'd, the slain in layers strewn, six deep.
Enormous stores Oyama's force due south

§ Outside Port Arthur.

Is bringing up, with vast munition too,
By re-constructed railway—used ere this—
Were carts, and junks on rivers not a few.
Large reinforcements constantly arrive,
And frequent outpost skirmishes take place;
Cold weather now at early date begins;
But troops are season'd well such ills to face.
From Tokio Headquarters comes a strange
Report—"The foe advanced to Sha-lin-ho;
Retired next day to Hu-ang-shan, and donn'd
"Chinese costume"—scarce known as Russian foe.
Our piquets were attack'd on Mukden Road
By Russ; who, when repulsed, then left their dead,
Some rifles too were near them found; these men
Were also clad in Chinese garb," 'tis said.
A Russian scouting party lately met
A Japanese patrol, the latter threw
A packet small, address'd to Russian staff
From daring spy, who met his ill-starr'd due.
Disguised as Chinaman he passed the lines,
Court-martial'd said, "With calm I meet my fate,
I die for country, Tsar, and faith. I wish
My death made known to friends at early date."
The startling news arrives that Russian Chief,
To neutralise effects of battles lost,
From Petersburg received injunctions strict,
To strive for conquest soon at any cost.
Main Army Russ, first time in this campaign,
Offensive operations hath assumed;
Advancing south along whole length of line,
Straight into lion's mouth, it now seems doom'd.

O'er sixty miles Oyama's force extends,
In horse-shoe form it doth quiescent stay,
And hopes the Russians may get into noose
Prepared, to "central point" may wend their way.
Excitement great prevails; the Russian Chief
Before advance, an order gave to force
Unsoldier-like, and boastful to extreme,
Like none e'er issued in stern warfare's course.
The thrilling drama now at length unfolds;
We heard ere this of "conflict's phases new,"
If Russians try relief of fortress great,
A most tremendous battle must ensue.
Full force the deadly struggle now proceeds,
Both armies near Yentai are face to face,
¶ Oyama swift reduced his length of line,
Repelling foes *en masse* in every case.
Two thousand horse, and one brigade of foot
Communications cut of Japanese;
The Russians even captured some few posts,
But these in turn were won again with ease.
'Tis said at Tokio, this force, cut off,
May captured be, repulsed at any rate,
Such movements doubtful prove in every war,
And yet succeed with mobile forces great.
Meantime an Army Russ, with eighty guns,
And six divisions full, of foot, were thrown
Upon Kuroki's large main force; two days
This battle raged, result is not yet known.
The Russian Chief his best division chose
For this assault, and reinforced left wing;

¶ To twenty miles or thereabouts.

Oyama then gave order for advance ;
His left and centre forward sought to bring.
From massing numbers great would foe prevent
Again Kuroki's force ; the Russian Chief
Dare not deplete his centre, nor his right,
As Nodzu now advanced in time o'er brief.
Artillery duel long began the fight ;
The Russian flank attack well plann'd hath fail'd ;
The latest news gives details of defeat ;
Mikado's arms have now, in truth, prevail'd.

39TH CANTO.

The greatest fight of modern time proceeds
Through darkness, as through daylight all the same,
A drawn-out battle fought at quarters close ;
With fury foemen strive to reach their aim.
The Russians slow retire along whole length
Of line, while fighting every inch of way ;
The record speaks of slaughter most immense,
*Of Russian thousands buried on each day.
The General Russ no longer fights to win ;
He can but hope to extricate a part
Of grand imposing force, he held in hand,
In days just past, with confidence of heart.
Cut off he now may be, unless he strive
With might and main to get away from foes ;
"The Army Russ," Oyama now declares,
"Hath been frustrated while attempting blows."
"Its vast offensive movement ends throughout

* 9,000 already reported by Japanese.

In final failure," says despatch of late
Received from Marshal (known for great reserve),
From warfare's "Master"—quite of recent date.
The conflict rages still tremendous in
Its force, through ancient city's southern land;
The Russian right brave Oku tries to turn,
Which foes make stubborn effort to withstand
At this most crucial point in all the line.
‡ A Russian General scored a small success,
The first in this disastrous dread campaign,
With way-worn troops, which Japanese hard press.
Encounter fierce with bayonet ensued
(O'er six assaults, near by, had first been made),
At last the Russians captured twelve field-guns
And one quick-firer, which in trench was laid.
But then again more guns have been secured,
And more positions seized by Oku's force,
Who still advances on to Sha-ho near,
Yet hath not crossed the river in his course.
Kuroki still pursues the Russian left;
No later news of progress since received,
Mikado's birthday seems to be the date
Of grand assault on fortress unrelieved.
It seems almost pathetic now, in truth,
To hear of Russia's joy at capture small;
No battle through campaign she yet hath won;
The guns retaken were from "Yalu" haul.
Ten days' hard fighting, near the Sha-ho line,
Leaves foemen eager still at latest date;
Oyama now reports the Russian strength

‡ Sakharoff.

Against his centre, reinforced, is great.
He states "that fourteen guns abandon'd were,
When column was surrounded at Lone Hill ;
(Yamata cut his way through Russian force)";
Ecstatic joy his foes at this feel still.
A Russian rally did at length take place
Reserves held back fill'd gaps in army great,
Full six divisions strong to aid retreat ;
For Russian Chief expected ills of fate.
When he advanced by "Order of the Tsar,"
Strategic plan unskilful then was thought
By every expert of the Powers Great ;
To vanquish foes "at any cost," he sought.
Five thousand men the Russians own they lost
By fire and steel along their line each day ;
One thousand, roll of Japanese marks too,
Fresh troops their Chief awaits for battle fray.
A lull in this Titanic struggle fierce,
The latest news asserts hath taken place ;
Ten miles from Mukden Japanese now halt ;
They drove their foe fifteen in ten days' space.
No doubt both sides alike await supplies
And reinforcements great for conflict new ;
In Tokio, 'tis thought, main Russian force
Across Hun River soon will be in view.
'Tis certain now that capture of some guns
From Japanese, and isolated post,
Upon "engagement" left no special mark,
Effecting no result on either Host.

40TH CANTO.

The Baltic Fleet hath pass'd on through the Belt
En route for Eastern waters risky, far ;
'Tis doubtful whether effort will succeed,
It will depend on Russia's lucky star.
A storm of indignation stirs each heart,
Throughout the British Empire's breadth and length,
At dastard outrage by the Baltic Fleet,
Twelve thousand miles from foes in naval strength.
The Russian Press in wild hysteric mood
Had paved the way for panic in the Fleet
By stating Japanese were laying mines,
And ships at "start" torpedo craft might meet.
The Russian Admiral, with loss of nerve,
‡Nine score of trawlers met off Dogger Bank,
He fired, without a first blank warning shot,
On harmless fisher folk, and trawler sank,
With international green lights aglow,
And number'd figures shown on every boat ;
When search-light's glare illumined well around,
And mark'd the scatter'd trawling nets afloat.
The Foreign Office, with no loss of time,
Hath taken up a firm determined stand,
For "breach of law," well-known to Powers Great,
For wanton outrage "protest," holds in hand,
The King to emphasise this crisis grave,
Expres'd his sympathy, and grief profound,
To Hull's chief magistrate in message sent,
§For "flagrant act," in well-known fishing ground.

‡ Hailing from Hull

§ In use a hundred years.

To Russia Ultimatum hath been sent,
Demanding prompt redress for wanton crime ;
And pointing out the callous conduct shown
By officers to victims at the time.
The Continental journals with accord
Denounce the act with grave and stern reproach ;
The French, and German show keen ridicule,
The Austrian experts term of "cowards" broach.
A witty writer in the German Press
Says, "Russian Admiral's heroic feat,
Of firing into peaceful fishermen,
Doth famed Don Quixote's bold adventures beat.
Who rode full tilt, one eve, with lance in rest
Against a flock of sheep, with leaping spring,
Believing they were warriors bold and fierce,
Some foreign force in arms against the King."
Derision keen is roused throughout Japan
At "valiant deeds of vaunted Baltic Fleet ;
Men say, if officers are men of 'nerves,'
How may they act, when Togo's force they meet ?
Will mental state deranged develop then ?
As now they take poor harmless fishing boats
For warships Japanese, through panic fright" ;
Their callous conduct too chief journal notes.
In Danish waters crews were crazed with fear,
While there, two fishermen were nearly shot,
Approaching Fleet with message from the Tsar,
When boat near warship at close quarters got.
The chief of Hospital Steam Mission Ship,
Attach'd to Trawler Fleet in Northern Sea,
Gives truthful version of late tragic deed,

Amid the murd'rous fray all facts could see.
"The worst half-hour I spent in all my life !
Before midnight we haul'd, and shot our trawl
In common way, when men-of-war appear'd,
And pass'd south-west, then slowly steaming all.
At twelve o'clock I sighted many more ;
As soon as they came close, searchlights were thrown
Upon us full, and then began attack ;
At first I thought blank shots were fired alone.
Until I heard the shots pass overhead,
From every ship the fire was sharp, and strong,
And then I knew, at once, the case was grave,
For ships in line the firing did prolong.
Across the deck the shots flew whizzing past,
And also close to wheel-house, where I stood.
I order'd lights to be put out ; we turn'd
To ships, our head, so form'd no target good.
Thank God we were not struck ! I went on board
The boat, which took off victims from the Crane,
|| Which sank ; four vessels riddled were with shot,
And others damaged sore by shrapnel rain."
Three other crimes were wrought in Northern Sea,
Through "secret orders" to the Baltic Fleet,
"To fire on any vessel that came close,
Or any craft suspicious it might meet."
A Swedish trading vessel was attack'd,
A very storm of shrapnel round her flew ;
A ship Norwegian met with same assault ;
And German trawler was bombarded too.
Our loyal Colonies are up in arms,

|| Struck by four shells.

(Columbian wrath for outrage doth not lag)
That Russian fourth-rate naval power should dare
To offer insult to the British flag.

41ST CANTO.

From Vigo Russian Admiral † reports
"Two steamers like torpedo-boats were seen
Among the fishing craft off Dogger Bank,
As outlook kept on Russian Fleet is keen.
These steamers moved at highest rate of speed,
My squadron fired at these fast ships alone;
I think no 'warning shot' at first had sped;
That trawlers had been struck was fact unknown."
On crime, or blunder, in the Northern Sea,
Swift British naval orders follow'd great;
So Mediterranean, Home, and Channel Fleets
Did concentrate in full, at earliest date.
The British Government's most just demands
Are these: "Apology for outrage grave;
To victims, ample compensation sent;
No quibble guilty officers should save
From punishment which richly they deserve;
That no such tragic blunder may recur,
At any future time through reckless course;
Security be sent, without demur."
Official declaration is announced
From Tokio, "That never hath Japan
Torpedo-boats, away from base e'er bought
In far-off England, since the war began."

† Rojdestvensky.

This strong denial must give potent weight ;
Their naval Staff believes the Baltic Fleet
Will never get as far as Eastern seas,
Famed Togo's far superior force to meet.
They think the Russian Government ne'er felt
Desire to send it forth to meet grim fate.
That " Incident of Dogger Bank " will form
Excuse to stop its progress soon or late.
They reason, Russian Admiral was ill
When he departed on his war-path bold,
If expedition were no bogus one,
A sick commander scarce control would hold ;
Or navigate so many thousand miles
To meet superior force in any case ;
If truly boats-torpedo he had met,
He should have followed them and sought their
base.

'Tis now assumed (in quarters more than one)
The Russian Chief did fire upon his own
Torpedo-boats, when off the Dogger Bank ;
Eight left for cruise, but fewer now are shown.
Some explanation of this deed is found
By crews of Russian warships, crazed with fear,
First firing on their consorts, then upon
Each vessel that they sighted far or near.
'Tis clear the Fleet went down the Northern Sea,
And shot at every single craft they saw ;
Five vessels have reported outrage vile,
Besides the British trawlers in their paw.
The German pilots, taking Baltic Fleet
Through Danish waters, speak of crews o'er young ;

Mere boys without a naval training good ;
Fear-stricken crews, their Chiefs with nerves un-
strung.

A German captain lately made report,
"The Russian Fleet while steaming straight away
Through Danish waters in a fog o'er dense,
No single light on warship did display.
My boat with fog-horn sounding loud and shrill
Passed Russian ships within a cable's length,
Which, even then, their sirens did not use,
So panic-struck were they, in all their strength."‡
Some strange intelligence is now at hand
That Baltic Fleet used "code of signals new,"
Which caused the tragic deed in Northern Sea ;
Thus grave incompetence seems full in view.
The Russian Squadron nearing fishing fleet
In loose formation, signall'd were by Chief
"The column in division line ahead ;"
That rear-most ships mis-read obtains belief.
And crossing over from port line got on
The starboard side of starboard line full speed,
So raised alarm, attracting fire at once
From their own consorts, with no special heed.
Perceiving their mistake, these wandering ships,
|| 'Tis thought, to their own station hasten'd back,
Which gave impression they were hostile ships,
As they were flitting on some errant tack.
When British Navy use "new signal code,"
'Tis practised week on week, in all ways shown,

‡ Having in all forty ships.

|| In naval circles.

Until the new is learnt as well as old ;
The only mode efficient that is known.
The strange, misguided, hasty Russian Press
Gives highest meed of praise for flagrant deeds
Perform'd by highly vaunted Baltic force ;
Its poor ill-governed people thus misleads.
To England's just demands the Tsar replies,
"In hopes of bringing facts to clearest light,
Inquiry international I wish,
By God's good-will to judge the cause aright."

42ND CANTO.

Japan's wise Sovereign's natal day hath passed ;
Port Arthur's fate is not as yet assured ;
Her bold besiegers hoped they would prevail,
By that great day all forts would have secured.
At Kioto this monarch famed was born,
And fifty years have told their wond'rous tale
In Eastern Isle since then, with change on change
So vast, that detail'd record here must fail.
A "Constitution" he, in time, proclaim'd ;
And martial force re-modell'd, navy too ;
A Parliament to nation gave as well,
With all the finest Western methods new.

The most heroic figure in great siege,
In fact throughout this tragic, fierce campaign,
Is gallant Stössel wounded ; like his wife,
In duty's path, far-reaching ends to gain.
Port Arthur's "Florence Nightingale" beloved

Did leave o'er soon her weary couch of pain,
To kindle hope within despairing hearts;
Her noble task fulfill'd, was not in vain.
She traversed trench on trench; to cheer and soothe,
'Mid bursting shells in warfare's dread alarm,
The troops fell down and kiss'd her robe's worn hem,
As if an angel pass'd with virtue's charm.
The watchword aye is "no surrender still,"
When out of city's main defences cast,
To strongholds near, the General may retire,
And there maintain the struggle to the last.
The Japanese believe the Russian force
For quite a month can well prolong their stand
At Lio-te-shan, and Tiger's Tail as well,
With hope to drag out conflict now in hand.
Mikado's forces now command each side
Of town, by last assault positions good
Were gain'd, so they can enter now at will
The main east forts, which former stress withstood.
The Japanese a tunnel now construct
Beneath peninsular from Pigeon's Bay,
Which now hath reach'd a point near Golden Hill,
For mine explosions on the dread last day.
The Northern armies yet are face to face,
The river Sha-ho doth divide them still,
So constant outpost frays occur each day;
They both await supplies, all gaps to fill.
A correspondent gives some details new
Of Russian soldiers' all too sorry plight,
Who fought through strain and stress of this campaign;
paign;

On grave mismanagement sheds clearest light.
"No tatter'd beggar in worst case appears
Than vaunted Cossacks seen in force around;
In narrow, batter'd, Chinese hat of straw,
And Chinese jacket torn, are many found.
In worn-out yellow boot one foot is clad;
With Chinese shoe in holes, the next array'd;
His rifle slung across the soldier's back
By means of cord, or string pull'd tight display'd.
The bag, intended for his food and clothes,
Is filled with dirty rags of diverse kind;
The men's long hair and beards appear like tow,
And thin, pinch'd faces, too, you oft may find.
The Mounted Rifles look by far the worst,
Ungroom'd, to skeletons their horses worn;
From Chinese saddles bits of cord depend
For stirrup use, the riders' clothes all torn."
The Japanese are making progress great,
Have captured forts anew round fortress vast,
The final storm will not be long postponed,
Stronghold by grand assault will fall at last,
The Baltic Fleet is shadow'd on its way,
For British warships well patrol the course,
To delicate attentions hand it o'er
Of far-famed Togo's bold victorious force.
From Denmark comes report of outrage, too,
The squadron Russ on Danish gunboat fired,
For sake of peace this fact hath been suppress'd,
But Danes with angry feelings are inspired.
From Russian capital comes pleasing news,
That crosses, watches, purses, also rings,

When found on foemen dead by Japanese,
‡ Are sent to mourning friends, with other things.
'Mid scenes of carnage in the stricken field,
Kind acts appeal to every thinking mind,
They stamp a nation noble, great, and good,
When virtue so transcendent thus we find.

43RD CANTO.

Heroic Stössel still defends his post,
The Russian flag o'er fortress flutters still;
The Japanese essay to take some forts
North-east of town, a group on Shan-shu Hill
On side of land, Port Arthur's real defence !
And should they fall the Russian cause is lost ;
For final stand brave Stössel may retreat
To forts on "Tiger's Tail"—not counting cost—
He would not then defend this fortress vast,
Which must have fallen ere he refuge took ;
"Fort P" seems most important place to hold,
Which Japanese had won, and then forsook
For one half hour (recaptured by their foes) ;
Then General Ichinoye advanced in force,
And hard contested fort at length regain'd,
Which then he strengthen'd, as the safest course.
A Russian captive General Notzu sent
With missive into fortress, some time since,
Recounting facts of Muscovite defeats
'Neath Kuropatkin, which should truth evince.

‡ All loose money, etc., through the French Ambassador.

In garrison deception had been rife,
So Notzu call'd upon defenders brave,
Without regard to their commandants' views,
To make "surrender," as their case was grave.
A correspondent gives some details new,
Who reach'd by boat the lighthouse on the height
Of Liao-shan, from Minai Islands near ;
His crew were seized by Russian craft in sight.
His men transferr'd to fighting ships well-known,
The Perseviet and Bayan damaged sore,
And both in state of dirt beyond belief ;
Of Baltic Fleet no news was heard before.
When told of start delay'd, and progress slow,
'Mid dangers great of long, and risky way,
The captains gave up hope, cried "Now we're lost !
We thought the squadron would arrive each day."
In harbour, Russia's fighting ships, sixteen
In all were view'd, and none dismantled yet :
Machine small guns alone had then been sent
Ashore, to render aid near batteries set.
The correspondent noticed many bombs,
While he to General Stössel soon was led ;
He saw bombardment's ravage great *en route* ;
Some shells hit true, but many harmless sped.
Throughout the town the coolies most are slain ;
Some thirty, he was told, fell every week ;
The city tranquil seem'd, the shops look'd gay,
In streets the tiny children playmates seek.
An officer was teaching demoiselles
To cycle, 'mid the flight of shells o'erhead ;
Ten horses slaughter'd were each day for food ;

One hundred still remain'd in bomb-proof shed.
When Stössel heard of Russia's great defeats,
He seem'd astounded at distressing news,
Exclaiming, " Then no help is there for us !
We fight till death ; I hold no other views."
He wish'd to know reverses' full extent ;
From garrison the news he would conceal,
And leave his troops bright hope, 'mid stress and strain ;
And only cheerful tidings would reveal.
To Japanese he gave high meed of praise
For gallant conduct, temper most urbane ;
He said, " He fought such foes with utmost pride ;"
A bursting shell now shatter'd window pane.
It struck the house in which they sat at lunch ;
'Mid fierce bombardment people have grown bold ;
No lull occur'd in conversation then,
For crashing shells are now a story old.
A later thrilling version comes to hand ;
New Chinese town is now demolished quite ;
The Japanese have silenced many forts ;
A battleship is sunk, scarce now in sight.
A thousand houses too have been destroy'd ;
The town is always more or less ablaze,
The stores and magazines are mostly burnt ;
Much valued wood is sought in ruins' maze.

The Boulogne fishing boats have sent report
Of further outrage off the Dogger Bank,
By ships of Baltic Fleet colliding there,
And cutting trawling-nets, which swiftly sank.
The Danes' torpedo boats will now patrol

Home waters, watching part of Baltic Fleet,
To guard their merchantmen from fresh assault
By lagging ships, which squadron soon will meet.
By rapid concentration of her fleets,
'Tis said, Great Britain hath the world impress'd ;
Her naval sons with heart and soul respond
To battle-call, with spirit bold possess'd.

44TH CANTO.

There seems no hope of peace should fortress fall ;
The Tsar will carry war to bitter end ;
His finest regiments now he concentrates ;
The Russian guards his prestige will defend.
These troops of Tsardom are Prætorian thought,
For as a rule they only take the field
With Sovereign in command, or 'neath his son,
And form the body-guard, to watch, and shield.
Tradition now must yield to grave events ;
The martial power of Russ hath been laid low ;
The Tsar with stern resolve makes effort great
To deal his foes at last a deadly blow.
The war throughout the Empire seems deplored ;
Reservists join the colours with dismay ;
And riots through the country now ensue ;
By measures stern, these troops their Tsar obey.
Deserters through the Empire's eastern bounds
Escape o'er Russo-German frontier line ;
The cause of ruthless war they fail to grasp ;
In martial deeds they feel no wish to shine.

Sore press'd Reservists start on weary way
To Eastern land, to fill depletion great
In all Siberian regiments, worn with strife ;
Six thousand miles they travel soon or late. .
And as each loaded train arrives at base,
It passes hospital (whose roll appals,
Which stands at eighty thousand wounded men)
*Between the Lake, and ancient city walls.
O'er fifty thousand Japanese are maimed
In Tokio alone ; this muster shows
The awful price now paid for modern war
By Powers Great, who chance to come to blows.
The Russian loss was fifty thousand men
In battle so protracted, styled Sha-ho ;
So what Port Arthur's cost in lives will be
No seer predicts, ere flag of Russ lies low.
Of superhuman task, that yet confronts
The Japanese before this fortress strong,
A clearer insight now is gleaned from facts
The correspondents give in details long.
A hero popular of well known siege
Doth organise defence, he scarce doth lead
Attack ; so General Williams famed of Kars
And General White of Ladysmith we heed.
Defence in every case most strikes the mind ;
One reads of hill on hill, and each one crown'd
With well-arm'd fort, with deep, wide moat beneath,
And pits with iron spikes set firm in ground,
Protected by entrenchments traced with skill
By finest engineers of present day ;

* Lake Baikal, and Mukden.

By spider's web of wire electric, barb'd
Entanglements on bold besiegers' way ;
At every point defended well by guns
Of every size and cast at present made ;
The foes approaching swept by constant stream
Of bullets from machine grim guns well laid.
By death-defying valour unsurpassed
The Japanese, as yet, have not attain'd
Their goal ; still inch by inch they now advance ;
The mighty prize will thus in time be gain'd.
One stormy night, 'mid blinding fall of snow,
A Russ torpedo-boat ran through blockade,
Across the Straits she dash'd to gain Chefoo,
The fastest Russian boat full speed had made.
From Port she brought despatches for the Tsar,
Not yet divulged, so import lies unknown ;
At once the crew blew up their boat, which sank ;
"Chinese disarming order" they were shown.
A fortress hero now is middy bold,
Who practised feat perform'd by Japanese,
† Resulting in destruction of a boat,
Which he by stealth torpedoed with great ease.
Audacity of plan successful proved ;
He borrow'd steam-launch from a warship near,
Well fitted with torpedo tube ; he miss'd
The search-lights' dazzling glare oft flash'd in rear.

† A four-funnelled destroyer.

45TH CANTO.

A thrilling episode of faithful love
In great beleaguered fortress hath occur'd,
A soldier's wife heroic traits display'd,
So brave defenders' hearts were deeply stirr'd.
Refused a "pass," in woman's garb attired,
In army she enlisted as a man ;
With dauntless courage fought both day and night,
Beside her husband, during time's brief span.
This Russian Amazon with valour served
In many fights, till death closed her career ;
She volunteer'd for sorties fierce and bold,
Her soldier-husband keeping ever near.
In Corner Hill's defence her worth was proved,
Although her sex discover'd soon had been,
Yet splendid record told of gifts unique,
Of spirit high, and flagging strength ne'er seen.
For great attention paid to wounded men,
Her place in ranks was e'en permitted still ;
She held great moral sway o'er all the troops,
Who never swore, regarding each her will.
Her husband fell sore wounded by her side ;
She nursed him with devoted love and skill ;
In time return'd to face the front alone,
Regimental post of messenger to fill.
With daring, rode for miles, from fort to fort,
She gave no heed to sound of battle crash,
Through bursting, whizzing shells she onward flew,
Her path of duty sought with fearless dash.
When visiting the trenches with report,

'Mid carnage dread her courage did not lag ;
A fatal shot then pierced this noble heart,
Her shroud in death was Russia's well-loved flag.

November twenty-second through Japan
Is day remembered for a great event ;
Port Arthur storm'd, and captured from Chinese
By famed Oyama's force with firm intent.
Ten years have pass'd since that red-letter day ;
Once more Mikado's armies task renew ;
For Russia outmanœuvred brave Japan,
And holds the lease of fortress now in lieu.
From old dynastic city comes some news ;
The calm which aye precedes the storm still reigns ;
Along enormous front are ranged the foes ;
At present neither side advantage gains.
Within a rifle shot, both day and night,
Advanced first line is ever under arms ;
Behind, reserves ensconce themselves in pits ;
Great nervous strain oft counts for false alarms.
Between opposing lines a neutral zone
Is strict observed, so combatants obtain
For ample use supply of water pure,
For all alike a great undoubted gain.
In Mukden, Chinese shops are open now ;
The city-people seem more calm ; but those
From country districts look most woeful still,
Enclosed in camps, as fearful scenes arose.
These fugitives the correspondents saw
Fall down and die of hunger, thirst, and cold ;

The aged parent, matron, infant young,
Along the city streets in raiment old.
'Twixt foes no racial feeling doth exist ;
When wounded soldiers Japanese are laid
On railway platform here *en route* for base,
Then kindly observation oft is made
By Russian soldiers only just arrived,
Who seem much struck by fine equipment clean ;
The things of value found on Russian dead
Are all return'd through French protection keen.*
A deep impression this kind action makes
On sentimental, though most cruel race ;
The Russian troops will offer cigarettes,
And try by signs to cheer when face to face.
Great fires in fortress lately have occur'd ;
New naval guns have vast destruction wrought
In arsenal, and other buildings near ;
'Neath forts, to place explosives foes have sought.
To heart of fortress now they win their way
By sapping, countermining through the rock,
By drilling holes, and blasting ditches long ;
The casemates too with concrete safe they block.
The officers devoted seem to work,
With courage high repel all sorties made ;
No murmur from the men is ever heard,
Who give to every task most zealous aid.

* To mourning friends, through the French Ambassador.

46TH CANTO.

No more significant event in life
Of modern Russia ere hath been evolved
Than "Zemstvos Congress" at St. Petersburg;
By which vex'd problems may in time be solved.
For Russian autocracy, proud and stern,
A mortal wound may now in truth sustain
By grave reverses dealt to Russian arms
On sea and land, and prestige on the wane.
If foreign policy disastrous prove
Of any Nation either great or small,
Historic page doth show in every age
It gives a death-blow oft, and *régimes* fall.
For autocratic system holding sway,
And ne'er unchanged since time of Peter Great,
Event so mark'd as Zemstvos Congress means
The end of ruthless power soon, or late.
This goal through anarchy may be attain'd,
Or through reform by revolution plann'd
By people Russ, or granted by the Tsar;
In France the same unrest spread through the
land,
In time of Louis Sixteenth, good but weak,
States General laws revoked, new system gave.
The Tsar is best disposed of all his Line,*
But least decisive, hence this epoch grave.
For noble impulse once he gain'd esteem.
Each Nation offer'd highest meed of praise
For Arbitration Congress he convened;

* Of Romanoff.

From "Peace to War" his changeful mood now
strays.

The recent fierce assaults on Fortress doom'd
Show progress great the Japanese have made,
Who outworks gain'd, with trenches deep and long,
Through mines exploding, 'neath defences laid.
Of strong main forts, north-eastern side of town,
The Islanders made onslaught valiant, bold,
On great position known as Metre Hill, †
And won commanding height, which now they hold.
A night attack successful then had proved ;
In hard contested struggle that took place
Four thousand men were slain of Nogi's force,
The loss sustain'd in sixty minutes space.
For thus possess'd, of Metre Hill at length
No part of harbour lies the least conceal'd ;
The Japanese can sweep with shot and shell
The damaged fleet, as ships are clear reveal'd.
The "Perseviet" is struck by fifteen shells ;
Bombardment great of vessels goes on still ;
Port Arthur like a furnace looks ablaze,
Dense clouds of smoke ascend from vale to hill.
The Islanders command the land due west
Of railway line, as yet five miles away
From oldest part of town, but still remain
Exposed to warships, that in harbour stay.
To capture highest hill of western range

† 203.

Brave Nogi's force advanced from nearest Bay,†
The key to all the other forts around,
Where naval guns it mounts in skilful way.
'Tis said the Russians made some efforts great
To oust their foemen from the captured height,
But met repulse, and suffered heavy loss ;
They still bombard the fort till fall of night.
Against the line of mighty eastern forts
The Japanese had hurl'd themselves in vain :
Intrepid Nogi sought the western line ;
And there success his valiant troops attain.
Besiegers hold with most tenacious grasp
Each fort they win with such great cost of life ;
The world is horror-struck at death's long roll
Of combatants alike in ruthless strife.
'Tis thought the crippled fleet will shelter seek
'Neath forts of Golden Hill and Tiger's Tail,
In open roadstead, so may be attack'd
By foemen bold, whose venture scarce would fail.
The rugged mountain chain on Liao-te-shan
Is waterless, though crown'd with forts of strength,
Some hills attain four thousand feet in height ;
No force could stay for time of any length.
To this great southern range of hills, 'tis said,
Heroic Stössel will at last retreat,
When men-of-war in harbour are destroy'd,
Then Togo will *salute* the Baltic Fleet.

† Louisa Bay.

47TH CANTO.

When Nogi's force an effort made supreme
To capture Metre Hill—till now obscure—
“Port Arthur's key” was found without a doubt,
Each passing day hath proved this fact more sure.
*A nameless hill, by number only call'd
Describing height, will now attain renown ;
Decisive stroke the Japanese have made,
The turning-point of siege their efforts crown.
This prize was in their hands a few weeks' since,
And then for shortest space of time retain'd,
The gallant Russians soon renew'd assault
Retook the hill, that wearied foes had gain'd.
But when a second time the Japanese
Had won the height, supports were sent in strength,
And fierce attack was made on “Eastern forts,”
Diverting foes, who fought the whole line's length.
And thus they could not throw their utmost weight
On one especial point in counter fight,
It cost both combatants great loss of life
In struggle so prolong'd to win the height.
Defenders, well bombarded from the forts,
Retook position thrice, 'tis said, in all ;
At last the Japanese made good their hold ;
This captured hill will cause Port Arthur's fall.
When Japanese with vigour trenches charged,
They were repulsed with bayonet, and then
In gale of wind pour'd oil on timber work,
Which set alight, and terror struck the men.

Advance was soon resumed by Nogi's force,
With sand-bags roads were made, the progress slow ;
Ere night, third line of trenches it had won,
The height was gain'd, the Russian Flag laid low.
Assault upon assault had been repulsed ;
Huge pits of fire defenders did prepare,
To stay the bold besiegers on their way,
Who fought at quarters close—thus met ill fare.
By foes alike high valour was display'd ;
This height's importance was at last made known,
When gallant Islanders at length prevail'd,
And †“feint” of this great war-like race was shown.
A correspondent with brave Nogi's force
Climb'd Metre Hill—six hundred feet in height—
At close of combat, lasting full six days,
When ghastly heaps of slain appear'd in sight.
On crest of hill strong works were torn away,
With tell-tale *debris* slopes were cover'd quite,
The trenches smash'd, and fill'd in deep with soil,
Where kill'd and wounded lay of gruesome fight.
In trench beneath one single section close
Two hundred Russian dead in heaps were laid ;
‡'Tis said hostilities suspended were
To give men slain a grave, to living, aid.
The Japanese perform'd a splendid feat
In mounting heavy guns in two days' space ;
High-angle fire directed by balloon
Ere this, with poor result, had taken place.

† The Japanese attacked two points at the same time to
cause diversion.

‡ Now contradicted.

From this fine eminence the Naval guns
Have sunk the Fleet, a sure undoubted fact ;
The Russian men-of-war are 'neath the waves,
Torpedo craft alone remain intact.
While shell-tornado burst with awful power,
The roadstead Togo watch'd, to intercept
His hard press'd foes, in case they might escape ;
But Russian warships most in harbour kept.
One phase of tragic drama ends at length ;
The First Pacific Squadron Russ is lost,
A target made for gunners Japanese,
In harbour sunk, at Russia's fearful cost.
The thrilling story, startling at all points,
Began in early spring, with struggle great
Between two Powers for Eastern Sea's command,
The strength of foes alike, so critics state.
Some Naval experts favour'd *then* Japan
In slight degree, but still no thought held sway
Of grave disaster, overwhelming, vast,
|| To Russian Navy, chronicled to-day.
The Japanese all vessels now have warn'd
To give wide berth to rugged Fisher Isles,
'Tis thought this group will form torpedo base,
And boats will issue forth and show their wiles.
Approaching Baltic Fleet will be exposed
To bold attack, while steaming on its course.
These hidden Isles lie off the Chinese Coast,
And could secrete a large mosquito force.

|| December 9, 1904.

48TH CANTO.

The Tsar of all the Russias sends a gift
To British officers, for efforts made
In saving Russian sailors' valued lives,
In battle off Chemulpo giving aid.
A silver bowl engraved is souvenir,
Five hundred guineas stamp the gift anew,
To Royal Naval Fund donation made,
Through gracious sense of obligation due.
In stern compulsion's presence now alone
Doth autocratic rule yield powers great ;
This fact is shown in each historic page
Of ancient realm, or young progressive State.
Late Tsar was ruler "absolute," in truth,
Of morbid fatalistic type we learn ;
The present Tsar, despite some kindly traits,
Hath ruled by code repressive, drastic, stern.
The only plan to gauge a Ruler's mind
In depth, of autocratic *status* strong,
Is well to note the Ministers of choice,
And judge if methods used are right or wrong.
No doubt De Plehve's assassination wrought
A most decisive crisis in affairs ;
His wise successor sought to loosen reins ;
Conciliation slight his advent bears.
He lighten'd soon the iron grip, affix'd
By predecessor firm upon the throat
Of Liberal Russ ; four Ministers resign'd
Through danger great to *régime* old, of note.
More liberal than the old, new system proves,

Still riots grave are quell'd by brutal force ;
Police the working-mens' procession stay'd,
And women struck with sabre in their course.

While off Port Arthur's entrance forming guard
The ancient cruiser Japanese Sayen
Was struck by floating mine and disappear'd,
With loss of captain, but few gallant men.
A sentimental waste is thus sustained
By Japanese, not one material now ;
This ship, through war's success ten years ago,
Was captured from Chinese—so all avow.
A daring *ruse* the Russians had display'd—
The battleship Sevastopol was moor'd,
With nine destroyers, 'mid the Red Cross ships
So-call'd—their foes from safety these have lured.
Five times assail'd Sevastopol hath been
By foe's torpedo-boat flotilla near ;
Responding with her guns shê made some hits ;
One boat, disabled, soon was tow'd to rear.
The Japanese bombard without a pause
The mighty forts protecting Golden Hill ;
By fire the arsenal is now laid low,
And rubbish doth Marconi's station fill.
The town is oft ablaze from end to end,
Torpedo works on Tiger's Tail destroy'd,
All merchant ships in harbour have been sunk,
The site of stately buildings waste and void.
*To sink the battleship Sevastopol

* Later Report.

The greatest naval efforts have been made ;
Though damaged by torpedoes, more or less,
She keeps afloat ; one gunboat near gives aid.
All parts of town and harbour, too, are seen
From famous Metre Hill ; the streets and square
Deserted seem ; few soldiers now patrol ;
Oft raging fire appears with smoke and flare.
Most buildings now are burned, and ruin'd lie ;
The harbour doth present a startling sight—
The turrets, masts, and funnels plainly show
Of ships-of-war submerged, in day's full light.
The docks on water-front are all destroy'd,
No single merchant ship is now afloat,
The shells from Metre Hill search every point ;
Ere this, crept forth each smart torpedo boat.
The only warship that escaped was then
In dock, she steam'd outside in gloom of night ;
Sevastopol, though fighting, met her fate
At hands of gallant foes, who hove in sight.
With utmost valour Togo's force assail'd ;
In face of death attack upon attack
Was made, to be repulsed by Russian fire.
From murd'rous guns, so boats were driven back.
Defenders used some steel torpedo nets,
And every shield in naval warfare known ;
Ship's bows had framework boom composed of
logs
And iron, bound with heavy chains—still shown.
In storm of driving snow with heavy sea
†Assailants found a chink in armour left ;
† Observed by Lieut. Hyamata, who discharged torpedo.

A single boat approach'd Titanic ship,
Discharged torpedo, thus a hole was cleft.

49TH CANTO.

Some Russians fled in life-boat to Chefoo,
When haze and blinding snow-storm did prevail ;
They made the passage with lug sail alone
In piercing cold, with wind a perfect gale.
The crew disabled, one frost-bitten sore,
Had brought despatch, and news of brighter hue ;
The statements seem conflicting past belief,
The foes both judge from diverse points of view.
These Russians now confirm the damage wrought
*To men-of-war, which can be raised at will ;
They were submerged in harbour by their crews,
Who water-tight compartments sought to fill.
They now assert affairs are not all through
So critical as Japanese report,
For three torpedo-boats the Russians sank,
A gun-boat Russ off entrance lies 'neath fort.
This boat hath not been hit in late attacks,
Nor famed Sevastopol, these Russians say,
The Japanese declare she lists to port ;
Foe's search-lights told where fleets mosquito lay.
" Official " news hath just been brought to hand—
The battleship Sevastopol was struck
By ten torpedoes in the late affray,
So met a tragic fate with grim ill luck.

* Now contradicted.

The Russian battleships, and cruisers big,
Disabled lie, brave Togo sends report—
Still six destroyers Russ in harbour stay,
Sevastopol lists ten degrees 'neath fort.†
The cause of this great siege of fortress vast
Was Russia's firm resolve to form a base,
Of mighty naval strength, in Yellow Sea,
And Japanese from home's fair waters chase.
Once more success the Islanders attain,
Intrepid efforts unsurpass'd they made
In storming northern fort, call'd East Ki-kwan ;
They found some Russian dead in trenches laid.
They captured ammunition, also guns‡ ;
A height they seized—a loss to Russians grave ;
They mean to force the fighting now, 'tis clear,
And will not wait to starve defenders brave.
These two successes mark an epoch new ;
For fort Ki-kwan is valued post ; from thence
The first important step will be evolved
Of piercing main, long line of vast defence.
Two shafts were driven forty feet beneath
The parapet of East Ki-kwan fort strong,
At self-same moment these exploded were
From deep dug moat, and great escarpment long.
The central part of fort had been destroy'd ;
Explosion's dread result was soon made known ;
While Nogi's guns the Russians finely shell'd,
Both far and wide the havoc wrought was shown.
The Japanese were tunnelling for weeks,

† Liao-ti-shan.

‡ Thirteen.

By shafts, with four branch lines, and mines well
laid ;

The ramparts north and east were blown away ;

First infantry assault was *too soon* made.

So this great rush did not successful prove :

All men were buried, 'neath the *débris* whirl'd ;

All mines at once exploding near mid-day,

Through rents the "red-badge" volunteers were
hurl'd.

Two holes were seen on northern wall of fort,

The "white-badge" men next charged and forced
their way

Through gaps in frowning wall, and met their
foes,

Who trenches mann'd ; but these could make no
stay.

Behind sand-bag emplacements with the guns

The Russian troops made final stand in rear,

And offer'd fierce resistance for ten hours,

'Till all were slain within the fort, or near.

At eve the final great assault took place ;

Led on by noted General Japanese ;

The fort was captured then by bayonet ;

Defensive works completed were with ease.

Japan is now quite jubilant with praise

§Of veteran General, so well known to fame,

Grey-hair'd, and bent, though full of nervous
strength ;

As engineer he earn'd an honour'd name.

This hero great of captured fort Ki-kwan

§ Samejema.

Was old-style leader "Samurai" renown'd,
In war of restoration man of mark,
Victorious now, his merits loud resound!

50TH CANTO.

The Russian Liberal era now hath closed,
Once more the Tsar and Council change their mind;
Repressive force henceforth will drastic prove,
So Zemstvo Congress freedom scarce will find.
Important editors have been convened;
The Censor gave a mandate all obey,
To act upon late Orders, styled "De Plehve's,"
Or full suppression would ensue some day.
Nobility's proud Marshal, who doth rank
As President of Zemstvo Council* too,
To Tsar petition sent as telegram,
To try and rouse wise sentiments anew.
His autocratic master thus replied—
"I think your acts presumptuous quite of late.
By stringent Zemstvo rules, laid down by law,
You must not move in grave affairs of State."
This condemnation, shown in missive sent
By Tsar, of "insolence consider'd grave,"
Was publish'd in the Press, to stay the hand
Of Zemstvo leaders, who reform might crave.
'Tis said, this curt reply to just demands
Hath stirr'd the people's passionate unrest;

* Similar to our County Council

The autocratic tone shows firm resolve
To use repressive means—considered best.
In former years a protest such as this
By Zemstvo President would have ensured
Siberian exile for a term unknown ;
Few leaders *then* the risk would have endured.
But now, 'tis said, no fear hath been aroused,
Nor e'en submission tender'd for reproof ;
The other Presidents determined seem
To firm support demand—none keep aloof.
For "Government of representative
Design" they now desire ; most men of thought
And culture high hold views in this alike ;
To influence the Tsar with zeal have sought.
The march of Russian progress this event
Hath shown ; with bounding stride it will proceed ;
On verge of revolution trembling stands
The Russian Empire, which reform doth need.
This stern decree now causes much dismay,
And agitation grave continues still ;
With no reform, and war reverses great,
The Tsar and Council gain confirm'd ill-will.
Each Russian Order promulgated now,
To mobilise fresh Army Corps, is met
By Japanes War Minister at once,
Who equal strength of force doth aye beget.
By numbers great Japan is not o'er awed ;
Before commencing war she counted cost ;
Her forty million people rate as one,
For love of country think their lives well lost.
The wise Mikado issued forth rescript

Of heartfelt praise and thanks for great success
Achieved, address'd to Togo of renown,
For work well done, through storm and danger's
stress.

A most significant report is heard—
Some cruisers, battleships, destroyers fine
Of squadron Japanese, were lately seen
Off Singapore, then steaming west in line.
The gallant Kamimura doth command,
The cruisers call'd at port, hence news is true ;
We may expect some startling action soon ;
Another naval phase this marks anew.
Since time of Baltic Fleet's despatch *en route*
For Eastern seas, considerations point
To Straits of Malacca, and Sunda too,
As meeting ground of foemen's forces joint.
The contact may be further south and west ;
To break up squadrons may be Russian aim,
To steal quite round by twos, or threes, to reach
Port Vladivostock—now well known by name.
The world is watching Eastern fortress doom'd,
But yet observant too of movement great
Of gallant Togo's splendid fighting force,
Who now main fleet withdraws at early date.
His work throughout magnificent in form ;
His watch relax'd, he now goes forth to meet
His foes once more, with ardent spirit bold : †
Beneath the waves lies first great Russian Fleet !

† At Kure.

51ST CANTO.

Japan's famed Naval Hero now returns
To Dai Nippon, his well-loved native land ;
A great ovation from all hearts receives,
His path triumphal, deck'd with lavish hand.
In hour of glory we may take some pride,
To early training he may owe success,
Our naval grand traditions once he breathed;
These may have roused his spirit more or less.
Japan's great naval power he did create,
An "island bulwark" in all time of need ;
As Nelson saved fair England from the French,
So Togo saved Japan from Russian greed.
‡ On day Mikado offers meed of praise
His mind's cool balance Togo will retain ;
"The child is father to the man," we judge ;
Discernment from despatches oft we gain.
Hard-working, unassuming he remains,
As on the Worcester training-ship of yore ;
The rudiments of science well he glean'd
At Greenwich, world-renown'd for naval lore.
His grand achievement stands quite unsurpass'd,
In naval warfare's modern story told ;
"He must defeat his foes"—instructions were—
"Without the loss of ships, the new or old."
This task the gallant Togo hath perform'd ;
Each armour'd unit now of battle-force
He brings to Island home, save one alone,
Which struck a contact-mine while on her course.

‡ A great day arranged at Tokio for congratulation.

L

This battleship, "magnificent Hatsuse,"
Was one of trusty weapons forged so true
By British hand and brain, to save Japan
From foreign foe, and raise her prestige new.
Eleven months have pass'd since Togo left
Home Port, to meet the squadron Russ, declared
Of equal strength in ships, but not in men ;
The Russians were ill-train'd, with nerve impair'd.
The Japanese are exercised full well,
Strategic points the officers all know ;
The gallant Togo thus began campaign—
"At Port Chemulpo go and sink the foe.
I wish you all success," the signal ran ;
Upon another mission off he sail'd ;
Regarding task assign'd to colleague *done*,
With no conception efforts ever fail'd.
This spirit aye appear'd throughout the war,
And oft such confidence begets great deeds ;
In officers, reliance he doth place,
And they in turn will follow where he leads.
Throughout the weary months of stern blockade,
Outside Port Arthur's mine-laid water-way,
No task, that spelt most certain death, was thought
Too hard, by men so eager to obey.
With smaller battle force than Channel Fleet,*
Which guards Britannia's shores from every foe,
Mikado's Nelson fought a Western Power
Redoubted deem'd, whose flag he hath laid low.

The glad new year brings joy upon its wings !

* One of eight British fleets.

Port Arthur's "full surrender" now is made ;
Defenders' grand resistance ends at last,
To gallant Stössel honour due is paid.
When once the Japanese had pierced *enceinte*,
And captured great main forts on eastern line,
Prolong'd resistance useless would have proved ;
Forts fell through former plan of sap and mine.
A messenger, who held a flag of truce,
From brave commandant Russ a letter brought
To General Nogi, asking terms required,
In full capitulation, which he sought.
Japan's wise Emperor, in course, replied,
With all the chivalry of his great race—
" To mark heroic conduct in defence
War honours shall be paid in every case."
As kindly harbinger of thoughtful care,
† A cruiser swift good healing power brings,
The British, skilful surgeons send the sick,
When joyful news o'er ocean loudly rings.

52ND CANTO.

The Russian Christmas festival hath pass'd,
Which symbolises tidings full of joy
To all, who hold the cherish'd Christian faith,
" Good will to men, and peace without alloy."
But what sad tidings now this Yuletide brings
To all the mix'd, down-trodden, vast Slav race,
The loss of greatest fortress that they own,
Pacific Squadron lost in ocean space !

† From Wei-hai-wei with full hospital attendants and
100 tons of provisions.

And thirty thousand men are captive held ;
Destruction too of grand Imperial dream
Of conquest o'er Mikado's valiant host,
In Yellow Sea obtaining rule supreme.
Not yet can Russia hope for peace at home ;
To stay discussion, measures stern are dealt,
The people's whisper ominous is heard,
Their wish for free expansion, dimly felt.
A more portentous sign there scarce could be
Than letter Prince Troubehkoi hath address'd
From Russia's heart of Empire, Moscow loved,
To Tsar, with Zemstvo's views then clear express'd.
As President of Council's conclave held,
Uniting in all aspirations great,
No Anarchistic doctrine doth he hold,
But *situ quo* to Tsar did plainly state.
Adherent leal of loved Imperial Throne
He speaks in patriotic strain all through,
He says, " the present rule will people drive
To revolution," which true hearts would rue.
His Emperor he warns in solemn tone,
" Internal forces long conceal'd now urge
Society at large to gain their ends,
Unrest at home will drastic rule submerge."
What must the Tsar now feel in hour of woe ?
His great ambitions all have come to naught ;
Fair fame of Russia tarnish'd, both on land
And sea, defeat of all great objects sought.
*A well-known scientist of Tsardom speaks,
" A Constitution Russian people crave,

* Professor Michael von Reussner

If ministers reform will not evolve
Repressive rule may end in crisis grave."
The present movement wide doth not proceed,
Like Revolution French, from low class third,
But from the first great rank of people Russ ;
And so the voice of "nobles" now is heard.
The educated mass, the wealthy too,
And nobles form one class—so first is made ;
This fact explains a puzzle felt abroad
When noble names are placed with lower grade.
This Russian Prince comes forth as leader now
Of men, who struggle hard to gain their right,
A miracle evolved from present war
Which falls on all with heavy hand of might.
Landowners Russ from torpor now awake,
This needless war affects their dear home-life,
For thousands still give up their sons in vain,
A sacrifice to cruel, ruthless strife.
Professor Reussner sagely ends remarks—
"If Tsar a Constitution now will grant,
The trembling flood yet stemm'd in time may be,
Home-peace will then dread Anarchy supplant."

When fall of mighty fortress was assured,
The Generals met 'neath height, which ramparts
crown,
Intrepid Nogi saw his vanquished foe,
The gallant Stössel, now of wide renown.
Mikado's General pleasure great express'd

At meeting hero thus, of staunch defence ;
In thanking him brave Stössel then replied—
“Besieger’s hand he held with pleasing sense.
For kind Imperial Order, gratitude
He felt, as war’s full honours he obtain’d,
This saved fair fame for him and those most dear,
Consideration great he thus had gain’d.”
The famed commandant proffer’d courteous gift
(When matters more important were arranged),
Of Arab charger prized, to Nogi brave ;
By stroke of fate his master would be changed.—
Mikado’s valiant General thus replied,
“I may not now this gift to friendship owe ;
My army would accept it with delight,
And zealous care on charger would bestow.”
Commandant said, “eleven-inch great guns
Had caused dismay by fearful havoc wrought,
In Sung-shu-shan no man was left alive,
Who cool and steady with persistence fought.”

53RD CANTO.

Of General Nogi’s Spartan early days
Some strange and startling episodes are told,
The training o’er severe of his great class,
The famous “Samurai,” fierce warriors bold.
For fifty years a fighter more or less,
He watched the Island Empire’s change on change,
From ancient Feudal System, grand in form,
To scientific warfare’s modern range.

When fourteen years of age he studied art
Of war, 'neath Lord of Coshu's iron rule,
Self abnegation proved the first thing taught,
Heroic discipline held sway at school—
*To disregard all pain, with mind serene,
To curb emotion deep, till life's last breath,
To even master love for wife or child,
To feel no poignant grief at pangs of death.
Oft thirst and hunger Nogi would endure
For lengthen'd spell, thus craving did subdue,
For miles would march unshod 'mid snow and ice,
To learn endurance great. which would ensue.
Through fiercest heat he travell'd far and wide;
His own sweet pleasure ever set at naught,
At public executions took a place,
The couch of dying men he often sought.
In cases surgical would interest feel;
These paths he trod to gain an honour'd name,
To emulate the doughty deeds of old
Ancestral line, of great historic fame.

As veil from mighty fortress now uplifts,
Surprise at prompt surrender strikes the mind,
For humble tone of message, sent the Tsar
By Stössel, explanation now we find.
No good sufficient reason, point on point,
For this Capitulation can be found,
But want of spirit, patriotic zeal
In force, which still held forts deem'd strong and
sound.

* Maxims taught

The strength of garrison at early date
Had been some fifty thousand men—all told ;
No dearth of food, nor ammunition good
In fortress found by Islanders so bold.
And o'er five hundred guns both large and small
Were spoil of war, with eighty thousand shells,
O'er thirty thousand rifles captured too,
With tons of powder good—the list now tells.
Sound small-arms, ammunition store immense,
Two thousand horses kept for food alive,
† With steamers, near one hundred ships of war ;
To quick effect repairs besiegers strive.
The great victorious army enter'd soon
Port Arthur, styled Gibraltar, Rock of East,
By famous General Nogi proudly led
On grand triumphal path of pomp and feast.
This fortress won at most stupendous cost,
For only heroes trod the blood-stained way—
With new historic views impress'd the world,
As great beleaguer'd port surrender'd lay.
For comrades slain a Service soon was held,
When General Nogi gave a fine address
To gallant force of officers and men,
Who nobly pass'd through battle's strain and stress.
“ For o'er two hundred days and nights you fought,
And bravely faced grim death by sword and fire,
As well as dread disease, but not in vain,
And ardent love of country did inspire.
Our foe's Pacific Fleet is 'neath the waves,
This fortress great, at last, surrender'd stands ;

† Forty-seven.

Your sacrifice supreme is thus repaid,
These forts, these hills, these streams are in our
hands.

You swore you would have victory or death !
I have received our Emperor's warm thanks,
This glory I monopolise too much,
My army shares this honour through all ranks.
This altar, raised to spirits now at rest,
Will ever stand in consecrated ground,
Be hallow'd through all ages as a shrine ;
On sacred spot shall pilgrims oft be found.
I trust our loved departed souls may all
In this great glorious phase of war partake,
This conquest with their life-blood was attain'd,
Their country's honour aye the goal at stake ! ”

54TH CANTO.

At stately function in St. Petersburg
A strange suspicious incident occur'd,
The Tsar on Neva's waters blessing sought,
When noise portentous, near, distinct was heard.
As signal guns were booming through the air,
Some whizzing bullets o'er pavilion sped,
Through Winter Palace windows high they crash'd,
From battery near the river flew o'erhead.
The officers in charge are 'neath arrest
With men ; impartial critics think event
Could not be due to chance in any way,
The Tsar to so-called “ error ” credence lent.

Another shell next moment was discharged,
In timber-work of barge embedded found
(Two hundred bullets large the can had held),
Between pavilion line and battery ground.
*Near eighty thousand men are now on strike
In Petersburg, who all demand reform,
Political and economic too,
Which they may gain through great rebellious
storm.

The Russian revolution hath begun,
On date now styled "Duke Vladimir's Red Day,"
The Tsar gave him command of Petersburg,
With potent martial aid he held full sway.
This most eventful Sunday left its mark,
As day of massacre, without compare
In recent times; the ruler absolute
Hath proved unwise, and weak in hour of scare.
The fitful Tsar his people would not meet,
Who flock'd in thousands, but he barr'd the way,
He sent his savage Cossacks forth in lieu,
†Who slew some hundreds on that fatal day.
The leading fact to bear in mind is this,
The working-men *en masse* had made request
To meet their "Little Father" face to face,
And he refused their earnest meek behest.
In spite of ruthless carnage unsurpass'd,
Though check'd, yet still undaunted people seem,

* Later report says 150,000.

† The death roll numbers 689

Though snows of Petersburg were stain'd with blood
"Progressive path" is right and wise, they deem.
These cruel acts mark "parting of the ways";
No more will loving reverence be found
In Russian hearts for him who dealt the blow—
Who ruthless gave death slaying orders round.
The Russian peasants most religious seem,
And superstitions hold to border line;
The Tsar is head supreme of Russian Church,
But would not exercise his right divine.
The delegation, headed by two priests,
Some sacred symbols bore on that sad day,
The Tsar, the "Lord's anointed," dared not stir;
To kinsman gave the power to shoot and slay.
The people's faith in Tsar, as "Pope," now ends;
Had he appear'd, and delegates received,
Commands at once would then have been obey'd,
From crisis grave would State have been relieved.
An Englishman was standing near a bridge,
And saw procession start in peaceful guise,
Which Father Gapon led with brother priest,
To meet fate's Protean dart that weirdly flies.
In full canonicals of gold brocade,
The Father held a massive cross on high,
The pious men, uncover'd, march'd *en route*,
Sight-seers, old and young, at once drew nigh.
Church banners, ikons, portraits large of Tsar
And Empress shown, as working-men were led
By Father George; at sacred emblems loved
Officials near, and soldiers bow'd the head.
But cavalry swoop'd down on *cortege* soon,

The infantry then fired from Neva bank,
The troops no warning gave, for moment's pause,
The men on snow-clad ground then dying sank.
With bullets, painted head of Tsar was pierced,
The man who held it fell shot through the heart,
The sacred symbol trampled under foot
On snowy pile, where murder'd men form'd part.
The priest with horror view'd the carnage great,
And cried aloud in stern avenging mood,
"For wanton outrage on defenceless men
Accursed be the Tsar, and viper brood!"
Circassian Cossacks are barbarians still,
To wipe away old scores felt keen delight,
To shoot the Russians down was welcome sport,
‡ In dance and song they spent the previous night.
'Neath Army Chiefs police refused to act;
At novel work the former lost their head,
And like Don Quixote thought all men were foes,
And so, alas! much needless blood was shed.

55TH CANTO.

"All men can govern in a state of siege"—
So thinks the Tsar, and Bureaucratic host;
To Capital he gives Dictator stern,
With unrestricted power—no vaunted boast.
This military chief (excepting one)
Is man most hated through the Empire wide:
This state of siege short time alone can last,

‡ In presence of two officers.

For week, for month, or on to year may glide.
'Tis not a power enduring without change,
For martial law is used as stringent cure,
The Tsar's advisers, scorpions give for whips,
To methods retrograde their monarch lure.
Some eight score million people Russ will not
By knout and bayonet be aye repress'd ;
In hands of chief, notorious for ill deeds,
The powers of life and death o'er Empire rest,
He holds the liberty and life of all
In hollow now of hard, unflinching hand,
Of men, of women, fragile children too,
The rich, the poor, the lowly, high and grand.
By scratch of pen alone he can wipe out
A family *en bloc*, condemn them all,
And cast them in some loathsome dungeon dank,
Or e'en by slow starvation may appal.
He can the men on strike to daily task,
At point of bayonet drive back at will,
Like plastic figures through a sculptor's hand,
Down-trodden men must duties then fulfil.
The Tsar hath alienated every class,
The nobles, men of letters, students too,
The lowly peasants, tradesmen cautious, calm,
All ranks, except place-holders—not a few.
And all this while a war colossal pends,
Disastrous both on sea and land in main,
Which drains the very life blood out of realm,
With no absorbing interest, doubtful gain.
An English correspondent states this fact :—
“ Vast Russia now is cloven quite in twain,

The links are broken, binding Throne to State,
No human force can weld these firm again."
The Tsar on one side stands, with stern behest,
His martial force by oath obeys him still ;
This forms one section sole of people Russ,
Behind, the nation lies with strong-mark'd will—
United too in steadfast, stern resolve
To free itself, in measure, from its yoke ;
In Capital, through Cossack aid, the first
Rebellious wave was stunn'd at one fell stroke.
The forces Russ may yet join kith and kin ;
On Neva bridge Marines refused to fire,
*And one or two foot regiments did the same,
Horse soldiers most aroused the people's ire.
Yet more and more atrocious deeds are known,
That mark eventful day of gory fame ;
The Tsar is Colonel full of Cossack horde,
Of "Butcher Regiment," stamp'd with lasting shame.
With bended head poor women knelt in snow,
"To let them pass" did soldiers loud beseech,
The officer in charge cried "Hew them down !"
His men then slash'd at all within their reach—
On head, on back, on neck, and hands cut off,
The heads of some they sever'd from the trunk,
These persons sent to hospital in parts,
And students pierced, who had 'neath shelter sunk.
And many children also then were struck,
Who tried to run away, alas ! in vain ;
Young maidens fair, who too essay'd escape,
Old men and boys were hit and fell in pain.

* Finnish Infantry.

The provinces are all in full revolt,
The scenes in Warsaw quite surpass belief.
A death-like silence reigns, except the moans
Of men in dying state—beyond relief.
Some martial forces there replace police,
The people's lives of no account they hold,
So shoot them down like pigeons in a flock;
Seclusion doth the upper class enfold.
†Less stringent rule the Autocrat deems wise;
Regarding Anarchistic phase intense
He seems somewhat disposed to listen now
“To voice of Justice,” views of common sense.

56TH CANTO.

ST. PETERSBURG.

As lightning flash, dramatic change occur'd
When vacillating Autocrat gave way,
Prepared to yield at once without demur,
When shown results of “Vladimir's Red Day.”
‡The prison doors of “Peter Paul” unclosed,
The “Intellectuals” thus do freedom gain;
The Press will have censorial views relax'd,
Free speech, without dire penalty and pain.
A Representative Assembly too
In full, will be convoked in time's short space—
The one thing all essential, people think,
For Russia's welfare true, in every case.

† Late report.

‡ Latelv contradicted.

All monarchs weak to great extremes proceed ;
On "rule supreme" the Tsar had set his mind,
And then signed "Magna Charta" without thought,
As reed is shaken by each passing wind.
This lightning change of mood "hysteric" seems ;
An instrument of dread, oppressive might,
No man at spur of moment doth become ;
Nor yet apostle true of freedom's light.
‡Again reactionary views prevail,
Another influence is brought to bear,
De Witte's Ukase—so lately sign'd—is shelved,
"Decree was never issued"—met ill-fare.
With little rhyme or reason change of front,
Determin'd, sudden, doth bewilder quite,
It makes confusion more confounded still,
Marks opposition new to people's right.

MANCHURIA.

The Japanese, our famous skill'd allies,
Are still triumphant o'er their stubborn foe,
For Kuropatkin's great attempt to turn
Brave Oku's left hath fail'd, through hard-dealt blow.
Across Hun-Ho the Russian force draws back,
With loss of full ten thousand men in all ;
Oyama states five thousand Japanese
In five days' fight on stricken field did fall.
He had pursued the routed, hard-press'd foe
With more tenacious aim than heretofore,
The Russian force eight miles had swiftly sped
To Chodas—north—retreating weary, sore.

‡ Recent news.

In recent battle there was *no surprise*,
A most essential point for conquest sure ;
In blinding snow-storm Grippenbergs attack'd,
And full exposure did his men endure.
The Japanese were watching all the time,
And knew precisely what their foe would do ;
In modern warfare, forces moving thus
Require a screen, or losses great ensue.
When guns and infantry all lie conceal'd,
Some form of earth-work shelter should give aid ;
But barren plain, in which entrenchments stood,
As hard as rock by Arctic frost was made.
§ The shells and bullets must have bounded then
With ghastly, grim effect on marble plain,
And must have killed the men, when striking ground
As sure and fast as falls torrential rain.
In death-roll greatest increase doth take place—
When mud (where shells lie hid till they explode,
And even bullets harmless disappear),
Is changed to soil like Adamantine road.
A curious rumour comes from Petersburg—
“That last engagement caused some friction grave
’Twixt Kuropatkin (Chief) and Grippenburg” ;
Ill-feeling great disasters will not stave.
Some military experts are convinced
The chief commander dealt reproaches great ;
For sacrifice of life he thought was due
To little caution shown at recent date.
Oyama states that when the Japanese,
Near end of struggle, made attack at night,

§ Military Correspondent of the “Daily Telegraph.”

Advantage then was on the Russian side ;
So each small column felt scarce hope in fight.
Surprise was great when they drove out their foe ;
The fighting power of this pick'd corps' right wing
Had been completely wreck'd by slaughter vast ;
Of forty thousand struck did rumour ring.
If e'en that awful total prove correct,
In fair proportion loss would only stand
To that in fierce contested Sha-ho fight,
Where ninety thousand fell by foemen's hand.

57TH CANTO.

Port Arthur fell through powerful new siege guns† ;
There seem'd no other cause, we now are told,
The devastation so astounding wrought,
That Russian force could not defence uphold.
The shells important workshops had destroy'd,
So no repairs effectual could be made ;
The Chinese Wall, upon the crest of ridge
In rear of forts, was soon in ruins laid.
Men scarce could understand how troops remained
Behind the Wall, in trenches open, wide,
With breach in traverse, bomb-proof shelters too,
Exposed to bursting shells on every side.
In rear of forts most awful scenes appear'd,
No single gun escaped from damage great ;
A late bombardment tore large holes in wall

† Eleven-inch.

Where shells went crashing through—grim shafts of
fate!

On gun emplacements landing, bursting there ;
To heaps of *debris* cannon were reduced,
In fragments, hurl'd by dozens down the hill,
With earth disturb'd, and splinter'd rock unloosed.

Some twenty ships, fast runners through blockade,
The Japanese o'ertook since war began ;
They sacrificed near twenty boats in all,
In closing Port—through " Narrows " swift they ran.
Port Arthur's fall to Kuropatkin's force
Was like a thunderbolt to all concern'd ;
'Till Baltic Fleet arrived, to give its aid,
The fortress would hold out, so men had learn'd.

RUSSIAN REVOLT.

The peace that reign'd in Russian Capital,
Since " Vladimir's Red Day," was but a truce ;
The men in thousands yet are out on strike,
To join the struggle others will induce.
At all great works around St. Petersburg,
The working-men untold resentment feel
For pledges unredeem'd their Monarch gave,
On which his presence set a sacred seal.
The delegates the stern Dictator chose
Were wash'd, and clad, and pack'd in sledges fast,
En route for palace famed, to meet the Chief ;
They waited long—in icy quarters cast.
No reason could they guess for visit paid ;
They were address'd by Trepoff—when at hand ;

He said the Tsar would audience hold at once,
Attention, silence, bows he did command.
Through long arcade, adorn'd with pictures rare,
These men were marshall'd slow, in one straight
line,

Colossal negro servants look'd for arms,
For this tame crowd might in attack combine.
His Majesty confronted them at length,
From written speech in hand he glibly read,
The workmen could not hear one single word,
So look'd at transcript—given them—instead.
The Provinces are all in full revolt ;
Heart-rending tales are heard of ruthless crimes
“Unholy” Russia perpetrates at will ;
As in dark ages, not in modern times.
In Polish towns fierce conflicts have ensued
Between the populace and martial force ;
The death-rolls seem like lists of battles long,
Schoolboys are even shot in daily course.
Rebellion too is rife in Polish schools,
At one, the girls fell prone through deadly fear ;
To quell high spirit martial aid was sought,
Some dashing, bold dragoons did then appear,
By Cossacks Captain Murray was attack'd,
Whose horse—most aptly—fell upon the ground,
From “murder” British Consul thus escaped,
While leaving home, on path of duty bound.
O'er ancient Warsaw death-like silence reigns,
No citizens dare tread by-ways at night,
The cavalry attack with sabres keen
The wandering, old or young, on wane of light.

The legal Bar of Petersburg hath pass'd
A resolution strong, which full condemns
The present drastic rule, with no restraint
Or curbing force, that tide of outrage stems.
Despotic men in power receive high praise,
And marks of favour from the Russian throne.
At earth's tribunal monarchs do not stand,
Their thoughts and deeds are judged by God alone.

58TH CANTO.

Restrictions new are placed on Russian Press,
Enforced throughout the Empire far and near,
No mention must be made of home revolt,
As mystery promotes the reign of fear.
The Government now holds more stringent views,
In special Russian system ne'er doth halt,
Detectives, secret agents, spies, police
Will have their power increased to stop revolt.
To govern realm by Autocratic rule
Becomes a task more arduous each day ;
A new created Ministry will start,
To hold the "spider-web " with firmer sway.
*Of methods Russ revolting tales are told :
A female student flogg'd hath been severe ;
Police some information wish'd to glean
Of " Vladimir's Red Day," or time quite near.
She, though her neck by sabre-cut was slash'd
In dreadful carnage wrought, in conflict dire,
Was dragged from hospital with brutal force,

* The Correspondent of the Paris " Temps."

Despite strong protest, 'mid the surgeon's ire.
Police officials question'd her forthwith,
The names of friends at first she would not tell,
She then was whipp'd without regard for wound,
But still reluctant proved for lengthen'd spell.
So they applied the dreaded whip once more,
At last they gain'd their aim, with truth assured,
Police obtaining facts they wish'd to glean
From tortured girl, who trial great endured.
By ambulance brought back, as time elapsed,
Near fainting, pale as death, she could not stand,
When garb was re-arranged, she shriek'd with pain,
With anguish stricken sore by cruel hand.
With mass of livid weals from head to foot
A sorry spectacle she did present ;
On milk-curd bed with care she then was laid,
On mitigating pain were doctors bent.
No isolated action did this prove ;
By couch a gendarme stay'd both night and day ;
But still these evil deeds at length were known,
The whip in Capital had held full sway.
Blood-curdling horrors still increase by shoals,
Like ghastly visions seen by mind distraught ;
Atrocities, police enact, outdo
The most barbaric race in fierce onslaught.
A workman's demonstration plann'd had been
At Morhileff ; police the crowds attack'd,
Dragg'd Jews up flight of steps, to throw them down
A mangled heap, with limbs asunder hack'd.
Young girls were beaten till bereft of sense ;
In deadly swoon one maid was cast to " dogs " ;

The slain in hundreds placed on cart or sledge,
Then thrown in pit, as worthless wooden logs.
The awful scourge of drink accounts for much,
The high, the low, the rich, the poor all drink
To great extent throughout the Empire Russ;
From shameful exhibition do not shrink.

†The village Court-room shows this failing worse
Than in the days of serfage now gone by;
By treating "Mir" to potent *vodka* loved
The litigant on verdict can rely.

In Army, Navy, every service Russ,
Prodigious drinking habits oft are seen,
While fighting first-class Power, famed Dai Nippon;
The loss of nerve from this grave cause hath been.
Effects of evil habit so pronounced
Is seen in engine-room of battleship,
In cruisers's conning-tower oft as well,
In Fleet-Commanders' blunders—slip on slip.

FEBRUARY 17, 1905.

The "one red star of grim tyrannicide"
O'er darken'd Russia sheds its lurid light!
By bomb Imperial Duke hath been laid low,
A scion fear'd for retrogressive might,
In moment's space cut off among the living thus
By dread conspirators' oft fatal way;
'Neath carriage "charge" was thrown, with full
effect;

Reprisal first for "Vladimir's Red Day."
"Jew-hunting Prince" was synonym well known

† See Sir D. M. Wallace.

For this tyrannic bigot, holding place,
In ancient Moscow wielding power supreme,
So mark'd for cruelties to Jewish race.
'Tis hoped the Tsar will now be strong and wise,
His ablest ill-adviser he hath lost,
His down-trod people small concessions ask,
Which he could grant at absolute small cost.‡

59TH CANTO.

In Russian Capital conviction grows,
That Eastern struggle cannot be maintain'd,
With revolution full in force at home,
And no success by land or sea yet gain'd.
'Tis said the Tsar quite fails to understand
The peril grave that now surrounds his throne ;
The deep unrest that through the Empire reigns,
Which he, as Autocrat, can stay alone.
Ere this, great rulers absolute of realm
Have thought themselves, till crash of doom, secure.
Until an outraged people found a vent
Near palace grand, in threats of vengeance sure.
A Sovereign often makes mistake in lull,
Which sometimes follows brutal dragonnade,
And thinks it marks submission, full, complete,
So still expects his drastic rule obey'd.
The Russian Press demands entire reform
In fullest measure known, without delay,
To give the nation power to guide itself,
Promoting order, law, in righteous way.

‡ To Autocratic rule.

“ No executions, exile, torture, chains,
Nor methods used by brutal force police,
Will serve to calm the Russian people now.
Abyss 'twixt 'ruled and ruler must decrease.'
Through carnage winter snows were dyed bright
red,

Our blood-stain'd cities bear a lasting mark :
Concessions may re-kindle love for throne,
Of wide rebellion's flame may quench the spark.”
A meeting students held in Petersburg,
And many thousands, picturesquely clad
In garibaldis yellow, blue, and red,
With flowing hair, appear'd in spirit sad.
From pulpit one denounced Manchurian War,
(Allow'd by General Trepoff use of hall) ;
With burning topics all conversant seem'd ;
With utmost *verve* set forth the rolling ball.
A demagogue in type,—excited spoke,
“ He wish'd his fellow students then to swear
To use all efforts known, to overthrow
The present rule of murderous, deadly scare.”
To peasant class the Russian student oft
Belongs, and doth support himself by work ;
He knows the aims of class, from which he
sprang,

All questions moot is never known to shirk.
Of “Vladimir's Red Sunday's” dire events
One student spoke in high dramatic tone,
Of women slaughter'd, tender infants too,
When some by fusilade fell wounded prone.
All spoke of urgent, wide reforms desired,

"For conscience, freedom from all priestly thrall ;
Full liberty for Russian speech and Press,
A Constitution representing all."
Now Southern Russia sways in full revolt ;
Great force is used 'gainst men who misbehave ;
'Tis said, in Baku "order reigns complete,"
Unruly ones lie dead—await their grave.
Most awful scenes of carnage have occur'd,
And Anarchy is rampant far and wide,
The blood-red flag is hoisted with *aplomb*,
The "Marsellaise" is heard on every side.
Another sinister report comes in—
*A Russian Prince at Warsaw hath been kill'd,
Who order gave to shoot the people down ;
Reprisal's chapter grim again is fill'd !
Throughout the Empire railway men propose
†To strike on March the fourth—Red Letter day ;
This means a peril grave to Throne and State,
Supplies endanger'd through Siberian way.
On Black Sea coast revolt is in full swing,
All institutions, schools, and shops are closed,
And private houses into forts are turn'd,
Caucasians now to Tartars are opposed.
All towns in state of civil war appear,
And shots proclaim the conflict day and night ;
The Black Sea Fleet bombarded Poti near ;
‡Few Russian troops uphold the rule of might.

* Prince Andromikoff.

† The anniversary of abolition of Serfage.

‡ Not in sufficient force.

60TH CANTO.

The rumours heard of peace are rumours still,
 The Tsar will run all risks, contends again,
 Until decisive battle hath been fought,
 Will not admit his strength is on the wane.
 His councillors believe some happy turn
 Of fortune's wheel may yet retrieve the past,
 So wish to give blind fate a chance once more
 On sea, and land ; thus fatal die is cast !
 The money question now appears most grave ;
 From rank of first-class debtor Russia drops ;
 From month to month her " scrip "—in bonds—will
 prove

Of lesser worth, till Eastern warfare stops.
 The Government in great dilemma stands,
 The Autocrats would grave discredit earn,
 If this campaign should end without success ;
 If war proceeds, the strikes will spread—we learn.
 If men, who head revolt, should carry out†
 Asserted plan of railway strike entire
 On Russian lines, then peace would be assured,
 Without regard to Tsar's express'd desire.

A most pathetic incident occur'd—
 ‡Grand Duchess Sergius, noble, gracious, good,
 The cause would learn of her late husband's death,
 So by the culprit's side in prison stood :
 He said he felt " no personal dislike
 To late Grand Duke," assassin had been sought

† To stop supplies.

‡ A niece of King Edward, the " Peace-Maker"

By fighting band, by lot the choice did fall
To slay the Duke, who evil deeds had wrought.
When *aide-de-camp* appear'd in prison cell
He found the Duchess—tender-hearted, kind—
At table seated by the captive's side,
And both dissolved in tears—distressed in mind.
To culprit then Grand Duchess question put—
“Do you believe in God”—undoubted fact—
He answer'd “Yes,” then ikon small she gave,
And said, “I will forgive your cruel act.
For God will judge between Grand Duke and you,
And I will ask that your sad life be spared.”
The man was deeply moved by Christian words,
But could not feel regret, he then declared.

Manchurian armies face each other still,
And desultory fighting oft proceeds,
Reconnaissance and raid thereby ensue,
With no result in great effective deeds.
§ Distrust of Chief is felt through Russian force,
Dissensions great, and Anarchy prevail,
With negligence near border line of crime,
While hidden springs of intrigue never fail.
No zeal, no love of work at all display'd,
No patriotic rousing spirit seen,
And no devotion felt for Throne, or cause,
And thus the Army meets reverses keen.
Reports are heard of Japanese “advance,”
So once again hath battle fierce begun,
And still success Mikado's troops attain,

§ Report from a Russian correspondent at the Front.

Till now "attack" Oyama wish'd to shun.
To screen a force of sixty thousand men,
En route for Vladivostock, object seem'd,
Of skill'd Commander's force—the Russians say—
For this attack—so comprehensive deem'd.

The Paris Arbitration Congress ends
With England's speckless honour full maintain'd ;
Torpedo-boats were not off Dogger Bank,
'Mid fishing fleet no shelter sought, nor gain'd.
The tragic incident was caused alone
||By Russian captain's witless crude mistake,
The Swedish steamer "Aldbaran" he took
For boat torpedo—hence with shot did rake.
This ship a target form'd a good half-hour,
By lucky chance escaped from peril dire,
No single shot for yards approaching near,
As marksmanship was poor of Russian fire.
The cruiser's captain signall'd soon to Chief—
"Our foes' torpedo-boats have made attack ;"
He thought their own "Aurora" Japanese,
Of sense and nerve display'd unwonted lack.
With better aim their cruiser soon was hit,
Her Priest was kill'd, holes made in vessel too,
In this confusion "fishing-boats" were struck,
And then Britannia's protest did ensue.
The tragic error Russian ships observed,
They pass'd in line, steam'd off, thus gave no aid,
Inhuman act of panic-stricken fleet,
More grave than blunder, faulty vision made.

|| Captain of cruiser *Kamschaska*.

61ST CANTO.

The great decisive battle still proceeds ;
Some say a million men the struggle face,
The lines are near a hundred miles in length ;
Three miles was field of Waterloo's full space.
The Japanese announce well-timed success,
Some part of strong defensive works have gain'd
On range of hills beyond the river Sha,
Three lines in all the Russians there maintain'd.
From one great mountain pass on Tah-ling heights
The Japanese have driven Russian force,
Oyama's troops must yet one more possess,
To gain the route for Mukden's straightest course.
An army Japanese hath slipped away
Unseen, and threaten thus their foes, north-west,
And so will menace Russians in retreat,
Will ply siege-guns on city too with zest.

The Chunchuses, in north Mongolia, far,
Are swarming now in bands, and Japanese
Employ their aid with zeal, fast mounted men
With guns, who railway can destroy with ease.
Both combatants assert in clearest terms
That Japanese the Russian force hard press,
Its "right," at point extreme, is driven in,
It scarce can hold its ground, all now confess.
The Japanese put forth their fullest strength
In long and deadly struggle that proceeds,
This time they firm believe Oyama's plan,
So well devised, to sure decision leads.
The world doth watch, with growing interest deep,

This far Titanic combat, raging fierce,
Along this hilly, strong, distended line,
Which bold Oyama's armies try to pierce.
Encounters isolated oft ensue,
But these engagements all one scheme fulfil,
One settled purpose skilfully arranged,
To press the Russians back o'er plain and hill,
From ancient Mukden on to Harbin North,
And cut off part of great retiring force,
By flanking movements strong and well sustained,
Persistent ever in appointed course.
All troops engaged with splendid courage fight,
Of "loss" regardless seem the Japanese,
With valiant spirit they *renew attack*,
Oyama knows this trait, and seeks to please.
So thus repeats his efforts great to force
A way through centre Russ, or round a flank ;
'Tis said that Kuropatkin doth rely
On staunch defensive power of every rank.
Magnificent attacks of Japanese
On specified positions, strongly held,
Have been ten times repulsed by stubborn foe,
But Islanders at last resistance quell'd.
Port Arthur's great siege-guns have now arrived,
In action open'd on long line of front ;
The fierce bombardment shook rock, hill and dale,
Defensive line of Russians bore the brunt.
The roar of cannonade was heard for miles,
From near two hundred guns the shells were thrown,
Of varied size, which mighty havoc wrought,
Ne'er guns like these in field of warfare known.

A perfect storm of shells, as thick as hail,
Immense in weight, in fiery zone then fell,
The forts and buildings were to atoms blown,
Volcanic damage wrought for lengthen'd spell.
Defences Russ destroy'd on railway line
Caused Russian army consternation great,
As this destructive power reminded men
Of salient points in fortress' siege of late.
For days this ghastly struggle hath endured,
But no decisive end is yet attain'd ;
In strength Oyama's force is not impair'd,
Exhaustion's limit may by foes be gain'd.
Mikado's troops have borne the greatest loss ;
Still reinforcements constantly arrive,
To fill Oyama's swift depleted ranks,
To swell their number Ministers all strive.
Each great siege-gun is haul'd on "carriage light,"
For England's famous Captain Percy Scott*
Quite early sent designs to Japanese,
And warmest thanks from high officials got.

62ND CANTO.

The greatest battle known in any age
In far Manchuria hath been fought and won,
Near ancient Manchu city, wide renown'd,
Some twelve days' strife to conquest great hath run.
Mikado's valiant legions have prevail'd,
The Russian host is now in full retreat,

* Now Rear-Admiral.

Oyama's armies follow in pursuit,
Essaying thus a splendid martial feat.
The utmost peril now surrounds their foes,
Two hundred thousand may envelop'd be ;
The Japanese due south the Russians drive
To Mukden, who in great disorder flee.
The railway north is broken, so retreat
Prevents, and Nogi with his veterans bold
A fine commanding height *en route* have seized :
This hill Port Arthur's doughty troops will hold.
This all-important post is on the road
To Tie-ling camp ; a pressure swift and sure
Is now maintain'd complete on every side,
So Russians may disaster grave endure.
If Kuropatkin cannot pierce the net,
"Sedan" may be repeated once again ;
A mighty empire then may bite the dust,
And by reform internal peace attain.
The hard-press'd "central army" must retreat,
This, General Nogi's troops untired await,
From height will pounce right down upon their
prey,
Whose roads are block'd complete by evil fate.
Kuroki, after seizing "Ma-chun-tan,"
Pushed north, to lend bold Nogi his support,
And Kawamura's army too is near,
This overwhelming force may combat court.
A routed army Kuropatkin leads,
Whose dispositions crumpled up have been,
Beyond all recognition, in these twelve
Grim days of fiercest warfare ever seen.

Oyama, chief commander Japanese,
Bears martial figure, upright, tall, and slight,
A fighter from his youth, a "Samurai"
Of Kagoshima Clan, of sterling might ;
Of sixty years of age—or thereabout—
†He service saw at home for lengthened spell,
‡In Chinese war he held command, and then
Port Arthur, Talienwan, and Kinchau fell.

The curtain lifts on grand dramatic scene,
Momentous episode, that stirs the world !
Mikado's legions triumph o'er their foe,
His flag on Mukden's walls is now unfurl'd.
Manchurian capital is sacred held,
Dynastic cradle famed of Manchu race ;
Beyond the city lie "Imperial tombs,"
Which Japanese will guard, and naught deface.
As Russians ancient Moscow much revere,
So Chinese millions cherish Mukden too ;
Mikado's armies won it by the sword,
Their foes by trick the city gain'd in *lieu*.
By grace of China, Russia held a "lease :"
Of Mukden, soon a splendid city made,
A valued central post for province new,
With prestige great attach'd which ne'er will fade.
This follows Japanese, when Russian host
Is driven forth from sacred spot revered,
§When "talismanic stone" a guardian new

† In Satsuma Rebellion.

‡ Of 2nd Army.

§ The Celebrated "Black Stone."

Hath found, instead of haughty Tsar—so fear'd.
Mikado's armies still victorious prove,
And Mukden's battle will in future raise
To band select, of greatest generals known,
Oyama, who hath won the world's high praise.
And Kuropatkin now will be enroll'd
With those, who taste of bitter waters dank,
Whom crushing great disasters oft pursue :
In recent fight his troops in thousands sank.
Some ninety thousand wounded men, 'tis said,
The dismal list gives forth, with captures great
Of sixty guns, and spoils of war immense,
And Russian captives sixty thousand rate.
The Tsar's great armies do not now exist,
In concrete fighting force, or form, at all ;
Of late terrific hard contested fight
The dire result is loss, that doth appal.
Each hour that passes brings some tidings fresh,
Enlarges too the ghastly list of slain,
And wounded men, with gruesome tales of flight ;
Five hundred guns Oyama's forces gain.
To Tie-Ling General Kuropatkin flies,
With shatter'd force, to make a final stand ;
His foes await him there, with dire intent
To gain a further conquest, signal, grand.

63RD CANTO.

The Tsar in Council with Grand Dukes declares—
“The war to bitter end he will maintain,”
A force of full four hundred thousand men
With all dispatch will mobilise again.
The Russian people’s wish he sets at naught,
And that of all the world at large, as well ;
The “Peace Apostle so far famed of Hague”
War clarion sounds, with blast that doth repel.
This haughty Monarch ne’er admits defeat,
That obstacle is *chief*, in view of *Peace*,
And not Japan’s demands, which modest seem ;
No present hope appears that war may cease.
’Tis said, detachments Japanese from east,
And west, *due north* of Tie-ling camp have pass’d
To stop fresh troops thrown out from Harbin far.
A web round Russian force may thus be cast.
The Japanese have lost in recent fight
Some forty thousand men,—we now are told—
From Dalny come five thousand men a day ;
Encircling plan Oyama may unfold.
The Russian right and central armies cease
To count, the loss in battle proved so great ;
The Eastern Army hath alone escaped,
Arriving through the hills at Tie-ling late,
But *minus* twenty thousand season’d troops.
The Russian General Staff in late defeat
Own loss of o’er one hundred heavy guns,
Four hundred light ones too, in swift retreat.
Appalling pictures correspondents give

Of fleeing Russians, on the great main road ;
Whose panic reach'd a climax, when from hills
Shells struck both man and beast with baggage
load ;

Entangled batteries flying 'mid the troops
Of every regiment, fleeing fast for life,
And carts besides in thousands, on the way,
With sorely stricken men amid the strife.
With bands the Eastern Army march'd in camp.
An awful state of chaos *there* had been,
When stragglers, in confusion great, arrived,
But these were soon dispersed, and order seen.
Intelligence department fail'd to find
The dispositions true of valiant foe ;
The Russian Central Army changed its front,
And varied units lost cohesion so.
The Russian Officers from front report,—
On *victor's mercy* men themselves had thrown,
Surrenders follow'd in a constant stream ;
The Japanese *magnanimous* were known.
The country-side was found a barren plain ;
Half-frozen, starving soldiers gave in *then*,
The wounded scarce had chance to make escape,
“Starvation, or surrender,” choice of men.
From Petersburg a correspondent states,—
The Army now exists alone in name,
And lies almost in grasp of valiant foe,
Whose dauntless valour wins a world-wide
fame.

The Tie-ling camp is post of greatest strength,
With river Fan-ho flowing straight in line,

Like Sha-ho passing ancient Mukden's walls ;
Oyama's forces round this Town combine.
Due east of Tie-ling runs a range of hills,
And, sloping down to river wide, a plain ;
Here Linievich the Japanese attack'd,
Who own'd ten thousand men of force were
slain.

These troops the central rear-guard had *repulsed*,
"Attack" was part of fine strategic plan,
Reconnaissance in force, weak points to search,
Arrested men could not much further scan.
The fortified strong lines of Tie-ling Camp
Were seized by Japanese at dawn of day,
The Russians falling back on Kai-yu-an ;
As guns were not emplaced, they made no stay.
The heavy batteries all at Harbin *now*
Were not dispatch'd to camp in time, 'tis said,
So Kuropatkin sought retreat again,
With foes astride the rail and roads ahead.
To Harbin northward, o'er two hundred miles,
Fled shatter'd Russian force without a rest,
A rear-guard action fierce maintain'd *en route*,
As bold victorious foes aye hotly press'd.
*No further foreign loan hath been arranged,
And thus "finance" may hold important sway,
And make the martial Despot bend the knee,
And so for *welcome Peace* may pave a way,

* Now contradicted.

64TH CANTO.

Four Armies Japanese advance in line
Extending thirty miles, and foes pursue,
These fight a rear-guard action all the way
O'er arid district, that appears in view.
The Press of Dai Nippon compares retreat
Of Russian Armies, o'er this desert plain,
To *that* of Buonaparte, from Moscow burnt,
O'er snow-clad waste—where none could shelter
gain—

To Vilna far, in Arctic winter's grasp,
When ninety thousand soldiers fell in eight
Short weeks, along that dreary sterile path,
When martial host became the sport of fate.
The Japanese pursue relentless way ;
At Kai-yu-an arrived at length, but found
Their foes had then vacated camp entrench'd
Had burnt the stores, and left no bridges sound.
Bold General Linievich doth take control
In chief of all the Russian forces *now*,
In far Manchurian arduous campaign
A *prompt* tactician, experts will allow.
The Russian papers have announcement made
That General Kuropatkin leaves the field,
Dismiss'd by Autocrat with message curt :
From anger deep, long service now may shield.
†He holds the "Second Army's" chief command
Alone, by his erratic master's will ;
With no demur accepting lower grade,

† Now contradicted.

To Throne and State he feels devotion still.
 In tone of sympathy the Japanese
 Comment on Kuropatkin's late recall :
 They say, " Command was paralyzed by Tsar " ;
 Calamitous events did thus befall.
 They think that " Linievich is not o'er skill'd " ;
 To him scant praise they give—in measure half—
 " An easy going Chief, by men beloved,
 Who stands in utmost need of *able staff*."
 The German " General Meckel "—so well-known—
 An honour from Mikado hath received;‡
 As " Tactical Instructor " years ago
 He render'd valued service,—'tis believed.—

Japan holds spell-bound every English mind,
 She wins great victories o'er sea, and land,
 She adds to Island Empire Province wide,
 And wondrous gift receives at Nature's hand.
 In lower depth of waters near Japan
 There seem'd of great convulsive throes no dearth,
 Dread omens too, phenomenal appear'd,
 When mighty ocean gave an Island birth.
 In her destructive mood observers know
 Dame Nature well, but not in effort great
 Like *this* " Constructive," startling in result,
 § Which theories must change at later date.
 With boiling lake, with hills, with rocks, and *earth*
 Mid changing clouds of steam black, white, and red,

‡ Of the " Sacred Treasure."

§ Re formation of the world.

An Islet rises, by great hand of God,
From vast, mysterious depth of ocean bed !
'Mid dense white mist this wondrous Isle arose,
With rumbling noise at sea, and quaking land
On Southern Island near, while people stood,
With ardent gaze, by thousands on the strand ;
Volcanic force they took for " modern guns,"
They thought a grand sea fight was taking place ;
At last some mariners, with spirit bold,
Did venture forth on quest, in death's grim race.
Two boats then started, holding twenty men,
O'er sea in roughest mood, one soon capsized ;
No lives were lost, men's object grand attain'd !
" New Isle " they found, so hoisted " Sun Flag "
prized.
They watch'd this " marvel's " frequent change in
form,
From under pressure hill oft turn'd to plain,
Which clouds of steam threw off, then cooling down
Appear'd like moist bog-land, 'neath sun's hot
reign.
Five hundred feet to highest point of hill :
Soft steaming crust of land is three miles wide ;
" Nushima " (Island new) is name proposed ;
Nippon's right gallant sons on this decide.
In recent years a great volcanic force
Split Krakatoa down wide mountain face,
And half the Island cast in depth of sea,
When earth and stone went whirling into space.
And later still a town was quite destroy'd,
In night of horror, never once surpass'd,

When dread Mount Pélée burst with smoke and
flame,
And molten rocks and ash for miles were cast.

65TH CANTO.

By signs and tokens seen in Petersburg
The welcome note of "Peace" is in the air,
The Ministers may project entertain,
To Tsar with new proposals may repair.
The world at large must watch and wait events ;
Oyama too in same position stands,
† Who said, " I am a soldier, nothing more,
No matters politic pass through my hands.
To guard *intact* our Country so beloved,
This war our gallant sons were forced to wage,
(For interests international as well),
And *lasting peace* secure from age, to age."
Assuming " speech " reflects the thought of *all*,
This war appears then *non aggressive* quite,
Is carried on to full maintain alone
Mikado's Realm, and his protective right.‡
If Russia could Manchuria still retain,
And China mould to suit her own sweet will,
Corea sway in ursine close embrace,
Then Island Empire's safety would be *nil*.
If Russian influence o'er Chinese Court
Had ne'er been stay'd, nor opposition waged,
In interests far and near of " Open door,"

† To Reuter's Agent.

‡ Over Corea.

SCENE

CASE

51

A world-wide conflict might in time have raged.
 In what position Powers might have stood
 Is almost *now* impossible to say,
 The Anglo-Japanese Alliance sure
 Hath solved the problem in another way.
 If this Alliance be *extended still*,
 A settlement of Eastern question great
 In manner *permanent* may be evolved,
 With *moral aid* Columbian, soon or late.
 The Press inspired of Dai Nippon entire
 A wish expresses that Alliance strong,
 On basis broad and lasting, may be form'd,
 E'en "peace *pour-parlers*" then might not be long.
 "The terms of peace Mikado would discuss
 On modest footing quite, and e'en as well
 Indemnity forego, if Britain would
 Defensive Treaty form for lengthen'd spell.
 By which each party would be pledged to come
 To active, full assistance, if required ;
 If either's Asian frontiers met attack,
 Each Nation's force would give support desired."
 Mikado could depend on Britain's aid,
 If terms of peace *in future were not kept* ;
 Should Russia e'er our Indian Realm attack,§
 By Japanese the "Kyber" could be swept.
 The Island Empire satisfied would be,
 If this Alliance *stable* were arranged ;
 Her foe's humiliation would be less,
 The "abject *role*" of Russia would be changed.
 Here seems a lull in far Manchurian War,

§ In North West Province

Which may but prove a calm before the storm ;
For portents now appear of stealthy snare,
As Japanese encircling tactics form.
Supplies are stopp'd, so Russian force retreats
To river Sun-ga-ri, from Kirin line,
The Japanese repairing damage, wrought
By foes on rail, by skilful methods fine.

Grave Anarchy through Russia now prevails,
The Government still adds to lengthy list
Of places, that must lie 'neath martial law ;
(This news leaks out, for Press reports are miss'd.)
Intelligence of peasants' great revolt
Is now at hand—at Lumia men were led
By wounded soldiers, from campaign return'd,
Who through Manchurian war had fought and bled.
'Tis said, great devastation soon was wrought,
The crowd had burnt important building near ;
The Tsar's Livadian palace men attack'd,
The mob was not restrain'd through love or fear.
Through constant reign of terror Russia rules,
With dungeons, mines, and horrors yet unnamed ;
Her subject-races fast slip out of hand,
A "myth" they deem the mighty power claim'd.
To Empire Russ defeats are not unknown,
She oft hath met reverses in the field,
From *consequence* effected sure escape,
Fair fortune o'er her cast protective shield.

66TH CANTO.

Re Rojdestvsky's Fleet off Nossi Bé†
A naval officer hath statement made :
The Admiral seems hated by his men,
For arbitrary conduct oft display'd.
The demoralisation proves so great,
That discipline by measures most severe
Can be alone maintain'd throughout the Fleet ;
Men place no faith in Chief—it would appear—
In unreflecting mood, he orders gave
That "chant of death" each day be play'd and sung
On board the Hospital attending ship,
So nerves of invalids were highly strung.
From Paris information now arrives,—
That when the Fleet the Nossi waters left,
Ships' bottoms *foul* to great extent were found ;
Of two full knots of speed were *thus* bereft.
When ships are cruising far in open sea
Foul weeds oft get dispersed in weather rough ;
This fleet in harbour stay'd for length of time,
From wind and stormy waves met no rebuff.
The death-rate proved so heavy, men believed
By some ill chance that "poison" havoc wrought ;
To cleanse his ships, and cooler waters reach,
The Admiral a southern course hath sought.

The famed Oyama follows up retreat
Of Russian force with slow, persistent gait :
A good broad front his gallant troops display

† Off Madagasoar.

In onward march—sure harbingers of fate—
To Chang-chung-Kirin line they slowly trend
With every force, repose they do not need,
Advance precise, as on manœuvres bent,
In order like parade, no dangers heed.
A telegram narrates on recent date
How Cavalry work'd round to Russian rear,
Exploits of two detachments Japanese,
Who scouted ten long weeks, both far and near.

The door hath closed on peace *pour-parlers* quite,
The Tsar to voice of reason lists no more,
Humanity hath now no further claim,
He still afflicts his down-trod people sore.
The Autocrat, by stroke of pen alone,
This ghastly tale of bloodshed now could end,
This anguish, devastation so wide-spread,
And ruthless sacrifice of life forefend.
His Generals—ever arrogant—declared
A “military promenade” alone
This present great Manchurian War would be ;
The mass of people interest quite disown.
The *coterie* of Oligarchs corrupt
Have influenced the Autocrat anew,
Suggestions urged of vain ambition's aim,
As sure dynastic safe-guard—most untrue !—
If Tsar would end this much detested war,
He would be bless'd by subjects far and near,
From end to end of his dominions vast
No taunt, nor grave reproach, would he once hear.

A puzzle people deem far Eastern War,
For bloodshed find no reason just or true,
They know that Russia would some land annex,
That might enrich alone some favour'd few,
When great Slav race embark'd in "Holy War,"
Heroic sacrifices *then* were made;
Colossal act, renown'd throughout the world,
Was that of Moscow, burnt, in ashes laid.
Self-abnegation so immense ne'er seen,
When Great Napoleon march'd, with army grand,
On ancient Capital and *ruins* found,
Encircled wide by waste of ice-bound land.
Advance had been contested foot by foot,
Through country, barren made by Russian deed,
By patriotic band, to check the foe,
Inspired with noble zeal in hour of need.
From Tsar a strong appeal had issued forth,
To let invader reach a *worthless goal*,
Past houses burnt, and desolated fields,
O'er snow-enshrouded mounds, through death's long
roll.

67TH CANTO.

The Russian Lady-day great festival
Hath pass'd, "rescript" the Tsar doth still with-
hold,
Concessions on that date were not announced,
As hopeful politicians had foretold.
The tendency throughout the Empire grows
To passive, organised resistance sure :

The Congress Medical, with one accord,
Admitted wrongs, did then and there abjure.
Eight thousand Doctors, public bodies, too,
In solemn manner bound themselves in deed
To circulate the "resolutions pass'd,"
To aid observance full, in time of need.
Late Minister de Plehve a system form'd,
That Medical Committees 'neath Police
Stern *régime* should be firm controll'd, from *this*
The Congress Members vow'd to get release.
"League Medical" is formulated *now*,
With branches founded through the Empire wide,
Which all professions join, with aim alike,
To gain complete reform all coincide.
An end to Bureaucratic rule they wish,
A *régime* Constitutional in place,
High-school Professors, men of letters too,
†The Bar with delegates will question face.

The Russian fleet hath now pass'd Singapore,
'Tis shadow'd well by Cruisers Japanese,
Six battleships with Admiral were miss'd,
Famed Togo's grey-hounds scout with perfect ease,
To risk all things, in final throw of dice,
With courage high, the Tsar at once decides,
To gain the sea's command his aim supreme,
A vital factor while this war abides.
'Tis thought in Tokio, the Autocrat
Was three months late in sending forth his fleet,

† The Legal Bar.

For since Port Arthur's capture, Togo's ships
Have been o'er haul'd, are ready foes to meet.
From Nossi Bé some sad accounts are sent,
Crews Russ felt great climatic change o'er soon,
From sun stroke many deaths each week occur'd,
An Hospital on shore proved greatest boon.
Disastrous news announced from seat of war
Produced discouragement, so spirit fled,
And many men deserted from the ships,
Recaptured, were to execution led.
The loss of Eastern Fortress great was thought
Sufficient cause for Baltic Fleet's recall,
With fine Pacific Squadron 'neath the waves,
But Tsar would take all risk that might befall ;
So sends Armada forth to meet its fate,
Thus victory, or ruin may evolve ;
All European Naval experts think
Blind *chance* alone this phase acute can solve.
A certain admiration people feel
For haughty Tsar, who after one long year
Of cruel warfare n'er admits defeat,
Drinks bitter cup to lees, yet shows no fear ;
Though sorely beaten Russia now hath been,
To *very knees* is not bent down as yet,
While fleet and army she doth still possess,
No lowly mood "reverse" will e'er beget.
Supreme last efforts served e'er now to snatch
A victory from grave prolong'd defeat ;
This hope buoys up the Tsar in present case,
His ships may yet destroy famed Togo's fleet.
The Japanese most anxious seem to give

Decisive battle now to Russian Fleet,
Their ships have been so recently refit,
With heavy armaments renew'd complete.
‡ A British Cruiser pass'd the Russian Fleet,
Then steaming south from Isles Anamba near,
Their Hospital good ship at Saigon stay'd
For medical supplies, it doth appear.
Professional opinion now express'd
Is that the fleet some time may cruise about,
To ascertain the movements Japanese,
Which knowledge could be glean'd by fastest scout.
Mail-steamer Nubia pass'd the Russian ships,§
While steaming *north* at nine full knots of speed,
Formosa's zone of danger seem'd their course,
To seek their foe, essay some valiant deed.
At Amsterdam some startling news arrived,
Bombardment off Anamba Isles was heard,
The Russians thought the Japanese were nigh,
Perchance a North Sea incident occur'd!

68TH CANTO.

From China Seas the world awaits great news,
Which may arrive at any moment now;
The Port of Ma-king-Island Pescadore
Is now their "Base," the Japanese allow.
The Russian Fleet again hath changed its course,
And Vladivostock seems objective true;
The Admiral is praised for bringing *safe*

‡ H.M. Cruiser *Sutlej*.

§ 42 Vessels.

His force along trade route with ships in view.†
The Squadron full was seen off Tizard Bank,
Some coral reefs with many islets green—
Approach'd through narrow, rock-strewn waters
round,

A welcome rest, no doubt, this spot hath been.
"Command" the Chief received from highest source
To try some scheme, some daring feat achieve,
(Regardless quite of all strategic plans),
Which Russian Naval honour might retrieve.
The Press of Dai Nippon at length compares
This grand Armada—in ironic tone—
To that of Spain, in great Eliza's time,
When England well defended State and Throne.

The Baron Kaneko, at recent date,
Address'd a New York meeting, held to raise
A fund for soldiers' widows Japanese,
Whose husbands' courage earn'd unstinted praise.
The tender sex was even moved to tears,
Heartrending seem'd description that he gave
Of hardships borne by men with nerves of steel,
Whose constitution help'd alone to save.
When glass, 'neath zero, thirty odd degrees
Oft stood, while men lay sleeping on the ground,
The wounded troops were swept from resting place,
As blizzards tore through icy plains around.
Japan's kind Emperor was deeply touch'd,
When first he heard of hardships so intense,
And said—"No fire again shall be alight

† To circulate the news.

For Palace warmth, till war cloud seems less dense.
For *warm* ourselves we ne'er consent to rest,
While soldiers suffer *cold* to such degree,"
So spoke this chivalrous, great Eastern Prince,
Example setting, that all men could see.
The Baron Kaneko grave charges made—
"Humane, great principles, so widely known,
By Russian foes were violated quite,
Contempt for warfare's usage thus was shown.
They dragg'd two hundred captive Japanese
Like Roman slaves enchain'd, with groan and
sigh—

For thirteen hours along the Mukden streets,
Inviting insult from all passers by.
These men were wounded prisoners, because
No Japanese, with blood or breath to fight
For Emperor and well-loved native land,
Would e'er surrender, e'en in sorry plight."
The Baron then proceeding, said—"We hold
Some ninety thousand captives in Japan,
All Muscovites, well treated with respect,
With no regard to class—as man to man—
Well-housed, well-fed, and also warmly clad;
Their parents, wives, and children may live near,
Kind efforts made to soothe their bitter grief
At loss of cherished home, and country dear.
Alas! one hundred thousand lives have now
Been lost in this most righteous war. If need
Should still arise for even *millions* more,
The Japanese no sacrifice would heed:
To vindicate and full sustain their right

Against a ruthless, strong, aggressive foe,
Brave Dai Nippon awaits with fortitude,
The hour, to strike a great decisive blow.

The Japanese are fond of British sport,
In 'roaring game' they take an active part,
To cannons' music, during fight's recess,
They learn from gallant Scots the 'curling art.'
A stump of tree was into sections cut,
And iron handles fix'd to play game new,
These form'd a substitute for "curling stones,"
Then eager crowds assembled sport to view.
Proverbial now is kind good nature shown
By soldiers Japanese of every grade.
In Russian flight from Mukden's battle great,
A boy quite small by father dead was laid.
A scout on wiry steed sad case beheld—
A child forlorn, heart-broken through distress.
He full of pity stopp'd, and spoke kind words,
But only fresh alarms did boy oppress.
At last, when fear in measure was allay'd,
The kindly horseman then pick'd up the child,
And held him firm, while dashing on to camp,
Attack'd by wolves across the country wild.
He soon spurr'd on his horse to racing speed,
At breakneck pace he reach'd a river near,
His steed then plunged, and swam with man and
boy,
So left the wolves discomfited in rear.

69TH CANTO.

In Russian Capital, at recent date,
A great historic incident occur'd,
(None greater since the Zemstvo Congress famed),
Which down to very depths all minds hath stirr'd.
A "first full parliament" in session met,
In strictest sense, with well plann'd word and deed,
And fully representative as well,
Which *lasting mark* hath made in time of need.
It took most efficacious means to leave
A record on historic Russian page ;
To self-same point affairs cannot return
E'er date that Congress sat, and stamp'd the age.
In secret held unknown to spies police ;
The Delegates' bold views did coincide :
Some eight score journals represented were,
Of Moscow, Petersburg, and Empire wide.
This Parliament some resolutions pass'd,
Expressing full the Russian people's views,
On problems vex'd, political in part,
And stand-point form'd, for promulgating news.
†The speeches were most eloquent, in truth,
Inspired by patriotic zeal intense,
But sparkling with sedition through and through,
And yet expounding views of common sense.
The claims of Jews, Armenians, Poles, and Finns,
Consider'd were, with classes much oppress'd,
The wish for Autocratic fall made known,
With hope that Peasants' wrongs might be redress'd.

† A correspondent of the "Daily Telegraph" attended the meetings.

The Delegates resolved, with full accord,
"That present rule must be abolish'd quite;"
Mere change of government will not appease
The people, now demanding freedom's right.
A total reconstruction they will have
Of present frame-work crude of Russian Realm:
This new executive, "The League of Leagues,"
Old drastic rule will try to overwhelm.
They speak in name of Federated States,
For bulk of Russians now to League belong;
They bind themselves to work, till change is
wrought,

To firm establish right, abolish wrong.
Officials Russ in Poland apprehend
A general massacre at Easter-tide;
At Moscow workmen still are out on strike;
All classes now in terror great abide.
Reports throughout the Polish Province state
The bridge o'er Vistula destroy'd will be,
All Muscovite Officials slain *en masse*,
Terrific conflagrations men will see.

The Russian Admiral, with all his fleet,
Left Port of Saigon soon for Camranh Bay;
He shelter'd in French waters far too long;
Foes' protest firmly urged no more delay.
A strongly worded note, presented then
By Minister in Paris, had effect;
The French sent orders off to Eastern Ports,
To press their wish on Russia did elect.
The Tsar responded quick, with no time lost.

Command wassent that "Baltic Fleet should move ;"
To coal, and cleanse his ships, and get supplies,
The Chief had wish'd, new course did not approve.
He hasten'd on to Hainan Isle at once.
In Chinese waters should not long remain,
To active measures foes would soon resort,†
From seeking Naval Base he should refrain.
The famous Togo, with his splendid fleet,
Off South Corea doth his foe await,
Armada Russ still hovers near the coast,
No eager spirit shows to tempt its fate.
Mikado's Admiral is world-wide known,
He represents the *maximum*, most true,
Of fine strategic skill, with caution great ;
But Rojdestvensky's *traits* are known to few.
Efficiency of Officers and crews
Is now a problem time alone can solve ;
If Russians suffer still from nervous fright,
Some dread catastrophe may soon evolve.
With great solicitude men wait events ;
Titanic struggle England watches now ;
Despite the thousand accidents of war,
Fresh laurels may adorn famed Togo's brow.

70TH CANTO.

Vast Russia now hath cause for grave alarm ;
'Tis not the hazardous position still
Of her great armies in Manchurian field,
And fear of Naval clash, that all minds fill.
‡ The Japanese would not hesitate to fight off a Chinese Port.

A massacre at home she doth expect
On Easter-day, in mode old fashioned too—
On "Intellectuals" is mob let loose
By ruthless men, who drastic rule pursue.
The educated classes, who believe
Without "reform" the Realm will meet its doom,
(Like fellow-subjects slain at recent date)
May meet relentless fate on day of gloom.
With ever varied change, unstable seems
A rule *unwise* of Autocratic type ;
In past six months vast Russia wept and bled
'Neath Monarch dazed through revolution ripe.
Reform's great rising tide throughout the Realm
The Tsar bewildered meets now face to face ;
He takes advice without reflection due,
On merest impulse acts in every case.
And therefore sanguinary methods grim
Of barbarous repression follow swift
On Autocrats' rescripts,—with promise *fair*,—
Which oft to wildest hope the people lift.
Reactionary council oft prevails ;
Next moment there appears surprising change,
The wise reformer hath Imperial ear,
When freedom dawns, with wide religious range.
The Russian Easter Sunday, people fear'd ;
For tragic terror rulers paved the way,
All city streets might then have run with blood,
A second Saint Bartholomew's grim day.
God's glorious sun arose and set in *peace*,
No further ruthless massacre did stain
Disastrous Russian annals—now so sad—

Of fitful Monarch's most unhappy reign.
At last the Tsar hath partly *calm'd the storm*,
Religious liberty he now concedes
To all his subjects, whatsoe'er their race :
Ukase astounding, that to freedom leads !
But later news asserts another fact,
The " Jew " is not affected by rescript,
The " Old Believers," with some other sects,
Are part relieved,—*still* Church and State afflict.
The Tsar's concession *no great boon* appears ;
'Tis true, some liberty of thought and speech
Is granted now ; the Tsar's *reluctant gift*
Will scarce affect, no heart will deeply reach.
The mass of working-men slight interest feel
In any new religious movement made ;
The May-day massacre in Poland roused
Their hate anew—fresh spark to mine was laid—
For near three hundred victims then succumb'd
To death, or wounds, including women fair,
And children too of tender age were slash'd
By sabre-cut, without one thought or care.
The people once again have been convinced
That " Little Father's " tender mercies sought,
Instead of blessings, proved but wanton acts,
Which butcher Cossacks on his subjects wrought.

A charming celebration hath been held,
The year's returning date of " Yalu fight,"
By Japanese in fair Manchurian vale,
When scenes of landscape beauty gave delight.
This valley was transform'd to fairy-land

By soldiers, ever skill'd in useful art,
They utilised each streamlet, hill, and grove,
So views of Dai Nippon form'd beauteous part.
The Yalu battlefield was reproduced,
With famed Kuroki's statue full in view,
'Mid lavish decorations quite *unique*,
Were theatres, and tracts for races too,
Approach'd by noble avenue of trees,
With cherry blossoms studded, sweet and fair,
While floral arches cross'd triumphal way,
An altar stood enshrined with lavish care.
A fine memorial tablet placed above
Described heroic sons of Dai Nippon,
Who fought and fell for well-loved native land,
Their *sacred* honour'd names inscribed thereon.

7¹ST CANTO.

On leaving fair Columbian shores for home
*A British Admiral, well known to fame,
On power of friendship spoke, 'twixt kindred race
And measures urged of world-wide peaceful aim.
Strong evidence he found of high regard
Between two Nations close by blood allied,
Agreement swift and sure was needed now,
That Flags entwined should wave aye side by side.
The two great Naval forces, full combined,
Might then police the seas with firm control,
By true convention might ensure *sweet peace*,
Far back the awful tide of carnage roll.

* Lord Charles Beresford.

The British Admiral did then proclaim
His views on coming Naval conflict near—
“ Though Russia’s force was greater than her foes,
Yet gunners’ skill might straight to conquest steer.
In fact, he felt conviction strong, and sure,
That Togo’s veteran fleet would battle win ;
This war’s grim horrors *new* might world astound,
And then a grand ‘ millennium ’ might begin.”
†An expert gives his views on struggle near,
Compares position *now* of Togo famed
To that of Nelson, on the trail of fleets
Of France and Spain, who *then* at battle aim’d.
Apart from fact that Nelson’s Fleet did not,
Like Togo’s, stand for *Naval force complete*,
The changes introduced by wire and steam
Have alter’d all conditions now of fleet,
To *that*, of just one century ago,
So full comparison can scarce be made,
But *now*, as *then*, first duty seems of chief
To keep in touch with foe, for future aid.
For if in tractless waters he should lose
All sign of combatant afar, or near,
Some dire catastrophe might swift ensue,
Torpedo craft might work with little fear.
The foe might double back, and strike upon
An alter’d course, and so with skill confuse
Opponents in a thousand trying ways,
As Neutral law the Russians much abuse.
Formosa or Tsushima Straits may be
The scene of greatest Naval battle far

† Captain Mahan.

The world hath ever seen in any age,
Unless torpedo fights should conflict bar.
We think the Russian fleet would harried be,
In fact worn down, and part destroy'd, before
A great engagement would be sought and risk'd ;
For all small craft its foes were famed of yore.
The Russian fleet broke up in squadron small,
When order came to move from Camranh Bay,
Some steaming north, some south, yet hugging land
In neutral zone sought pretext for delay.
Columbian, French, and British ships of war
Patrol the China Sea, and *do their best*
To guard their shores from this aggressive fleet,
From visit paid by most unwelcome guest.
If Russian ships should Vladivostock reach,
Or portion small of Rojdestvensky's force,
To *more effect* must use this harbour sought
‡ Than Fortress great, to alter war's grim course.
With hostile Navies conflict may ensue
At date Manchurian Armies may engage
In great decisive action, which would stamp
Effect on *progress* in next Naval page.
The Kaiser doth the present war review ;
In candid terms of Officers he speaks—
" The Jap displays in all essentials skill,
And highest goal *unselfish* ever seeks.
He, like Mikado's soldier, proves his worth.
The Russian Officer hath fail'd, indeed ;
The soldier Russ is stubborn in defence,
Persistent courage shows in battle's need.

‡ Port Arthur.

The Officer on service should adopt
A *simple life* ; the Russian much depends
On high luxurious fare, sought far and wide—
Champagne at mess a festive aspect lends.
The corps of Officers, without a doubt,
Is Army's 'kernel,' so must aye be fit,
Or else a martial force will suffer much
'Neath fortune's frown, by blows disastrous hit."

72nd CANTO.

The Russian Admiral of Baltic Fleet
Through failing health is superseded now,
But keeps command till distant Port is gain'd ;
To force of circumstance all mortals bow !
Internal malady with nervous strain
Is cause of this great, unexpected blow ;
At moment when dire perils must be faced,
The Tsar's " last hope " ill fortune hath laid low.
Mikado's Nelson with his splendid fleet,
By mystic veil engulph'd, is lost to sight,
Near Island Empire may be cruising now,
To guard home-waters with his complex might.
Famed Togo's strategy hath triumph'd still ;
His foeman Rojdestvensky's efforts great
To lure him on to Indo-Chinese coast
Have fail'd—so says report, at latest date—
When coming conflict shall in time ensue,
The master-mind will choose both hour and place,
For bold fleet-action, or for running fight,

Unless dense fogs enshroud wide ocean's space.
A dash for Vladivostock must be made,
For typhoon season now approaches near,
When woe betide all units weak, if caught
By China Sea's dread scourge, that all men fear.
Old ships of iron—coast defence—would sink
Like stones, and smaller crafts would have no
chance

Of riding out such devastating storms,
On which all mariners must look askance.
There can be no illusion as to task
Most perilous the Russian Chief essays ;
To reach far Eastern Fortress, he must pass
Japan's own Sea, and Tsar's command obeys.
Great dangers through these inland waters lurk :
Tsushima's narrow Straits will give a chance
To skilful, vigilant, and daring foe ;
From Islets veil'd flotilla may advance.
If coal supplies should Russian Chief permit
To make the longer course around Japan,
He *then* must also pass La Perouse Straits,
Through *day-light* steer, for *night* would passage
ban.

The Russian ships at bottom must be foul,
And this would militate against high rate
Of speed, and near eight months at sea might well
The ships' mechanical, full force abate.
Another Admiral awaits the fleet,
At Vladivostock will command o'er take ;
This fact may urge Mikado's Chief to try
Conclusions with his foe, and battle stake.

The Russian chief no triumph small hath gain'd,
In bringing forth Armada *thus* so far,
A leader masterful through cruise hath proved,
Resolved no neutral point should progress bar.
The Russian Admiral hath broken down
From sheer hard work prolong'd, great stress and
strain,

A state unsuited quite to exercise
The highest qualities of nerve, and brain.
When hour of conflict comes, all must expect
Destroyer fleet the first attacking line ;
Famed Togo hath enlarged to high degree
This part of his command—with wise design—
'Tis true that Rojdestvensky's Baltic fleet
Is better trained, more useful than the one
Which perish'd, so ill-famed, beneath the waves,
And back to Port made swift inglorious run.
No expert can believe the Japanese
Of their superior *moral force* have lost
One tittle yet, which they have full maintain'd
On sea, and land, to their opponents' cost.
Confirmed is Rojdestvensky's state of health,
As " fighting Admiral " he had no test ;
Now Birileff will take the full command,
Of Russia's Naval sons consider'd best.
At home the late Commander had been told
He could not live o'er long to win great fame ;
His anxious wish was *then* to fight and die,
To conquer and immortalize his name !
To Tsar this aspiration high was known,
Who was enchanted with exalted view,

Regardless quite that ills might intervene
In cruise, 'mid great climatic phases new.

73rd CANTO.

The greatest Naval battle ever fought
Now marks historic page, since age of steam,
When Russia's vast Armada met it's doom,
Defeated, scatter'd, like some evil dream.
By passing Bashee Straits the Russian Fleet
Gain'd waters Japanese ; strategic plan
Of bold Commanding chief was then to part
Famed Togo's force—ahead fast cruisers ran—
On morn of fateful day, about fifth hour
Corean Straits the Russian ships steam'd through,
And then appear'd small squadron Japanese,
To Isle of Iki Rojdestvensky drew.
The Russian Fleet went on full steam ahead,
A most impressive, most majestic sight,
It pass'd through currents running swift, and strong,
Went speeding on due north, with main and might.
Mikado's Nelson hover'd near his base,
With all his force was ready for the fray,
His extra fleet soon headed off his foe,
And then began the fight without delay.
The gallant Togo brought up all his ships,
Which he manœuvred with precision great ;
The Russians both in front, and on each flank,
Were enfiladed at tremendous rate.
As guns from fifty warships blazed away,

The scene was terrible, and yet most grand,
A mighty crash resounding time on time,
As loud reports commingled close at hand.
At first the combatants gave shot, for shot,
Both fleets were on the move throughout the fight,
The Russians could not keep their wonted course,
With foes each side, and one in front—to right—
So Rojdestvensky met with sore defeat,
Within a few short hours' fateful space ;
In no direction was he free to turn,
To pierce the line of ships, in headlong race.
He fell into an ambush plann'd with skill,
Since Madagascar's waters he had left :
In tactics *hesitation* he display'd,
Of all *cohesion* ships were *thus* bereft.
At once the Japanese became aware
Of foe's defeat, so fire did concentrate,
(As if volcanic forces were let loose),
On Russians train'd all guns, small sized and great,
Entrapp'd in *cul-de-sac* ; long lines of smoke
Then floated o'er the sea, oft interspersed
With vivid flashes from the mighty guns,
As if old ocean were a thing accursed.
When dread bombardment gain'd its height mid-day,
Each second mark'd the fiercest cannonade,
As Russian fleet steam'd north to reach its goal,
Which squadron Japanese with skill forbade.
It lay between this distant haven good,
And Russian ships, and northward steam'd as well,
Then shots from east, and west, from north, and
south,

On Russians doom'd, with fearful havoc, fell.
The spectacle was awe-inspiring, grand,
Two cruisers foundered early in the day,
Their upper-works were shatter'd into splints
Of iron, wood and steel, all borne away.
No longer Russian ships formation kept,
Some pointed stems to west, and some to east,
Proceeding oft in quite a zig-zag course,
Not giving heed to signals in the least.
With judgment, that in moments all supreme
Amounts to inspiration fine, and true,
Mikado's Nelson came to *quarters close*,
Pour'd in, at shorter range, dread fire anew.
The Russian ships, as fleet, did not exist,
In isolated squadrons struggled still,
To hostile coast by foes were hotly press'd,
With no escape from Togo's drastic will.
Till late at eve did awesome conflict last,
The air around had then become obscure,
The Russians tried to steer north-west in vain,
Till sunset rage of battle did endure.
Corean Seas became transparent, smooth ;
A glorious eve then gave a moment's rest,
The wind had spent its force and settled down,
Sweet peace was brooding o'er the ocean's breast.

74th CANTO.

In night's deep gloom the Russian ships moved on
Towards the North in horizontal line,
Their foeman's fleet across their bows then lay,

And, link'd with guns, proved barrier strong and fine.
In this dark hour a change came o'er the scene,
The ships of war loom'd silent, dim, and drear,
When lo ! A hundred boats-torpedo sped
With lightning dash, and sank the warships near.
The sea was swept with search-lights far, and wide,
The work of *day* was o'er, the work of *night*
Began ; the Japanese great battleships
Then cover'd bold attack with main and might.
Beneath tornado fierce of shot, and shell,
The tiny vessels darted forth to sting
And sink their mighty foes ; high-angle fire
On boats, the Russians tried in vain to fling,
A grand sea battle thus took place *at night* ;
The great search-lights make decks as bright as day,
Guns' lurid flash, like meteoric gleam,
Bejewell'd darkness in it's brilliant way.
Not e'en one moment's lull in deadly strife,
Inferno most complete was scene of fight,
Two hours had pass'd since mid-night chimes had
 rung,
When death's swift messengers appear'd in sight.
Through Russian fire the little craft dash'd on,
The water, shot would strike, but not before
The boat had darted on to warship's side,
Discharging deadly missile that she bore.
A grand result of one sole night's grim work,
Beneath the waves four battleships then lay,
Four gun-boats too were riddled through and
 through,
The battle raged with fury all next day.

With fierceness unabated foes fought on,
Famed Togo gave his enemy no rest,
Strategic plan of Russians proved so bad,
They could not fire as men who do their best.
The conflict raged along Nagata, north,
When sighted well from wild Korean coast,
Two battleships were captured on this day,
The Japanese of cruisers too could boast.
All sunk, surrender'd, seized, or soon intern'd
Were Russia's ships, of Baltic Fleet the best,
Some thirty-six, with coaling vessels too,
The finest force her Naval power possess'd.
From captives in Manilla echoes come
Of this Titanic struggle fought so well ;
It seems that Rojdestvensky was *surprised*,
Like thunderbolt his foes upon him fell.
The Russian ships steamed peacefully along,
No glimpse was caught of wary Japanese.
No gun-crews stood at needful post assign'd,
No decks for action clear'd, men felt at ease.
So sudden was their foeman's fierce attack,
No time had crews to get in fighting trim,
A storm of shell fell thick and fast as hail,
In age of scientific warfare grim.
Great battleships the Alexander third,
And Borodino, armour plated thick,
Were deftly pierced, and sunk by twelve inch shells,
Explosive "Shimose" powder did the trick.
The Russians train'd their guns too high by far,
Inaccurate with no display of art,
They hit the masts, and funnels *thus* alone

Of Togo's fleet, ne'er touch'd a vital part.
The Russian Admiral essay'd his best
To alter angle high, but was too late.
The fire of foeman was so true, and keen,
He could not change ill-fortune, ruled by fate.
Destroyers Russ were non-effective boats,
They acted in *defence*, not in attack,
Their foe's torpedo craft surpass'd them quite,
Destroyers rarely ever drove them back.
The Russian Admiral's Flagship was sunk,
Which Rojdestvensky with his staff had left,
Escaping in destroyer near at hand,
Which soon was seized by foemen bold, and deft.
The admiral with splendid courage fought,
His ship was isolated from his fleet,
One battleship against o'erwhelming odds,
Through fight he fired *all guns* with frenzied heat.

75TH CANTO.

Since Nile's great battle so renown'd was fought,
No Naval victory hath been so great
As *that*, Mikado's Nelson now hath won,
Far-reaching in effects, all people rate.
Four days of intermittent fog had hung
O'er Japanese rough sea, when Russian fleet
Made bold, unwise attempt to pass the Straits,
A hundred miles in width, where currents meet.
Tsushima Island stands about mid-way
Twixt southern end of Dai Nippon's fair land,

And Vassal State Korea, rugged, bare ;
A great torpedo base was thus at hand.
This Isle is strongly fortified all round,
The Baltic Fleet went steaming through the Strait,
Some signal stations stand on Islets near,
So Russians were assail'd, and met their fate.
A heavy wind sprang up, dispersing fog,
Then Rojdestvensky lay in view of foes ;
The battleship, that fired on fisher-folk,
Sank first, when combatants had come to blows.
Then, after grim torpedo night attacks,
The Russian ships were scatter'd wide, and fled
Along Japan's rough sea, and there pursued
By foemen bold, who onward quickly sped.
Third Squadron's Admiral surrender'd then,
Three thousand captives Russ were taken too,
The loss of life at present stands unknown,
Five thousand lives the experts think *too few*.
Some vessels, without fighting, struck their flag,
The running fight continued all next day,
When largest battleships ablaze were sunk,
The Baltic fleet annihilated lay !

With greatest joy the world hears welcome news,
That Peace proposals now are entertain'd,
To reason Tsar and Councillors give ear,
This fact alone shows point of value gain'd.
Negotiations slowly take their course,
For terminating Eastern struggle vast,
The Nations must expect prolong'd delay,

E'er much-desired goal is reach'd at last.
In issues so colossal, which involve
Conditions thus far-reaching in extent,
Some temporary pauses may occur ;
But Neutral Diplomatic aid is lent.
Of all main points, in claims of Japanese,
For months the Russians have been quite aware,
These must have reached their fitful Sovereign's ear,
With past, the *present time* doth not compare.
Destruction swift and sure of Russia's fleet
May not induce Japan her terms to raise,
Although as conqueror she's strengthen'd much ;
Her loss is small, her modest pose earns praise.
The Tsar must know the claims of Japanese,
He now approves of conference for Peace,
At Washington the Diplomats will meet ;
But warfare, pending questions, will not cease.
In these proposals had there been but *one*
In principle the Tsar could not accept,
The Congress then would not have been arranged,
So hope of Peace through veil of darkness crept.
To grim arbitrament of arms Japan
Was forced, that she her freedom might maintain ;
For all a nation holds most sacred, dear,
Was then at stake, so sea-power she must gain.
A loss of prestige great, and blighted hopes,
Was worst that could befall, by sore defeat,
Colossal Russia, with her vast resource,
If Island Empire should her foemen beat.
Mikado's shrewd Advisers wisely thought—
If Lia-o-tung Peninsula were held,

Corea, too, by great aggressive Power,
To interference she would be compell'd.
To independence full of Native land
The Russian rule would growing *menace* prove ;
To Autocrat Japan a challenge threw
To fight, or from the Manchu Province move.
Most solemn pledges " Holy " Russia gave
To Dai Nippon, and other Nations too,
To quit Manchurian soil at given date ;
But time elapsed, then word was pass'd anew.

76TH CANTO.

Statistics prove in Naval battle great
The Russians lost some fourteen thousand men,
All shot, or drown'd, those captured, or intern'd
By thousands, number quite another ten.
When sun went down the Japanese had lost
But three torpedo boats, and damage wrought
To ships of war was small, it was announced,
Scarce any point was hit the Russians sought.
The marksmanship of Togo's gallant force
Was *ultra good*, all experts now admit ;
The Russian crews demoralized became,
As fighting force were totally unfit.
Some plunged into the sea, and so were drown'd ;
In one or two warships the men were *brave*,
Their Officers would no surrender make,
Their honour, not their lives, they wish'd to save.
Of captured Russian battleship a tale

Is told, that stirs with horror every heart,
For overboard the wounded men were thrown,
In dastard act the Captain took no part.
Without a sense of shame this fact was told
By crew, with ne'er excuse for flagrant deed,
The awful shrieks of dying, injured men
Unnerved the rest, who ne'er to wounds gave heed.
Most lofty attributes the Japanese
Display, humane in thought to high degree,
Surprising much the *cruel* Russian race,
Foes' kindness oft in battle heat they see.
An Engineer aboard destroyer Russ
Reports—"When boat in sinking state was found,
The men plunged into water rough, and deep,
Expecting maxim-fire while swimming round.
He felt amazement when a Japanese
Destroyer promptly came upon the scene,
And rescued all the poor despairing men."
The Islanders to goodness ever lean.

Manchurian battle hath at length begun,
The fighting more or less hath been severe,
Both Russian wings have now been driven back
To Tsisamton, some thirty miles in rear.
Five hundred thousand Japanese advance
O'er hill and dale, one hundred miles in length,
From Gensan, Hasegawa doth appear
With quite one hundred thousand men in strength.
He swept Corea free from Russian troops,
To Tumen River now he makes his way,

Which he must cross, e'er forward he proceeds;
His foes may hold right bank, and make a stay.
Five thousand Russian Cavalry engaged
The Japanese *en route* for Lo-chan-pou,
But, meeting well directed cannonade,
Retired with loss, in great confusion too.
For panic-stricken seem'd this Cossack horde,
As they abandon'd valued large supplies,
They left their dead in front of foemen bold,
Who *burn* the slain, when chance doth apt arise.
Both east, and west along the Harbin line
Positions well devised the Japanese
Take up; reports now say, the Russian force
Is far too weak to make attacks with ease.
That Linievich evinced surprise to find
Oyama's troops extending left and right,
With overwhelming strength he could not meet,
So gave up hope to conquer in the fight.
Mistkenso, with his brutal Cossack force,
Was order'd out forthwith to make display,
To seek out isolated foes alone,
And then attack in some disturbing way.
Despite determin'd efforts *quite detach'd*.
The time for battle great approaches near :
Attempts to draw the Japanese, or part
Their armies vast, have fail'd, it doth appear.
These actions, oft severe, have not disturb'd
Oyama's schemes, but help'd, in fact, to show
Position true, minute, of Army Russ,
With method plann'd to meet the final blow.

77TH CANTO.

The darkest clouds of Anarchy enshroud
Great Northern Power, whose prestige now lies low,
In dim horizon gloomy signs portend
The coming storm, with whirlwind's ebb and flow.
With Poland every heart must sympathize ;
'Tis *there* the savage Cossacks hold free hand,
No greater horrors e'er committed were
By troops (term'd civilized) in any land.
There, slaughter indiscriminate took place,
For neither woman weak, nor infants e'en
Were spared in ruthless massacre so dread,
Against the Jews was shown the height of spleen :
No rites of burial were these allow'd,
And mourners too were murder'd on the way
To Jewish grave, where dastard acts ensued,
For dying men were plunder'd as they lay.
'Tis thought the roll of victims numbers now
Two thousand, in this grim repressive stage ;
A general strike at Warsaw will take place,
Retaliation marks historic page.
As news will spread across Caucasian lands
Mahommedans may disaffection show ;
Barbarities of " Holy " Russia's troops
May prove to Christian faith a deadly blow.
The gallant " Murom " Regiment, aye deem'd fine
'Midst Russian Horse, hath gain'd an honour'd
name,
On poor defenceless folk refused to fire,
So earn'd from Autocrats high meed of blame.
Through great unrest of Russian Empire vast,

The most dramatic incident occur'd,
On board the finest Black Sea battleship,
Whose crew a spirit mutinous had stirr'd.
Near all the Officers were shot, or drown'd,
The rebel seamen then the vessel took
To Port Odessa, where they seized some coal,
And gain'd supplies, but censure would not brook.
In fastest ship of all the Black Sea Fleet
(The best, that Russia owns in her sad plight),
The sailors' spokesman made complaint of food,
To wholesome fare they deemed they had a right,
Some murmurs on this point are often heard,
And wisely turn'd aside by *humour good* ;
To discipline Lieutenant would compel,
So shot the spokesman dead, as bold he stood.
And then the crew arose as if one man,
Some officers, 'tis said, joined mutineers,
Red flag of Anarchy was hoisted high,
And guns on Port were trained by privateers.
Odessa could not call on Black Sea Fleet
(Throughout the Squadron mutiny is rife),
For other ships might join in cannonade,
Cause awful ruin with great loss of life.
The dread of revolution spreads apace,
Another warship join'd the Potemkin,
The Admiral's Flag Ship in waters near,
And boat torpedo aids in battle din.
They shell'd the city with most dread effect,
Bombardment lasted long, till past mid-night,
The Black Sea Fleet had not join'd issues then,
No single ship had yet appear'd in sight.

The Admiral was order'd off to sink,
Or capture, Potemkin, and rebel crew ;
Announcement comes, "surrender was not made" ;
The fleet retired, no combat did ensue.
The horrors, rife in city so ill-starr'd,
Are told in graphic style in late account,
The soldiers rifles 'mid the fire and smoke
Caused death roll, like some battle fierce, to mount.
The streets were strewn with dead or wounded

men,

The quays were scorching walls of blinding flame,
No distant city suburb e'en escaped
A wide revolt did massacre proclaim.
In all directions buildings were ablaze ;
The Port and all approaches were destroy'd,
The conflagration reach'd a mile in length,
High railway burnt—for shipping goods employ'd—
Some thirty thousand troops in haste arrived,
Throughout the night blank darkness reign'd
complete,
Except the flames from burning quays around ;
Next day, at noon, appear'd the Black Sea Fleet.

78TH CANTO.

A Prince and Princess Japanese have reach'd
Our English shores on visit much esteem'd,
King Edward doth a welcome warm extend,
A compliment their stay is rightly deem'd.
Close ties now link this country with Japan,
Which will account for greetings loud and long,

Reception seem'd impressive in extreme,
Sincere, and heartfelt from great London's throng.
The Prince Imperial Arisugawa
Is not a stranger guest by any means,
For he attended far-famed Jubilee,
To British Naval customs still he leans.
He stands in near succession to the Throne:
This Prince on British ship, the Iron Duke,
From sixteenth natal day his learning sought
On China Station, meeting ne'er rebuke,
For quite two years, or more, and next transferr'd
To Channel Squadron, as Lieutenant *then*,
And later, some twelve years, took up command
Of warship Japanese—well liked by men.
In Chinese War he gained an honour'd name,
Of Naval Depôt was Commandant made
(The Portsmouth famed of Island Empire great),
The fourth fine Fleet he formed with skilful aid.
In temper Prince is resolute and cool,
With noble sense of duty, faithful, keen,
A leader *born* of men, whose love he won
By kindly traits, which through Campaign were
seen.

Princess Imperial, gentle, gracious, wise,
For deeds of mercy far and wide is known,
In Red Cross noble work throughout Japan
Enlighten'd interest wide hath always shown.
These Guests esteem'd have festive greeting met
In stately function, banquet, *fête*, and ball;
Lord Mayor of London, with a lavish hand
Warm welcome gave in ancient civic hall,

When toasts of happy augury went round,
While sentiments of friendship were proclaim'd
A wish for *staunch Alliance lasting, close*,
'Twixt British Realm and Dai Nippon so famed.

Rebellious conduct of the sailors Russ
Historic phase amazing doth create,
Two warships' crews, with those of transport too,
Hoist blood-red flag, ill-omen'd sign of fate.
This spirit too is seen in Black Sea Fleet,
By Admirals the case is thought so grave
The ships' mechanic force put out of gear
Hath been, the fleet for Tsar they *thus* may save.
The warship Catherine is now disarm'd,
Two Naval centres lie in state of siege,
Reservists are disbanded—sent on shore—
Who disregard their oath to Tsar their Liege.
Odessa now is like a huge arm'd camp,
Some fifty thousand troops make bold display,
Intimidate defenceless men on strike,
Quick-firers place, all ready for a fray.
In this ill-fated town the death-roll stands
At full six thousand—e'en may larger be—
The fleet ne'er tried to capture Potemkin,
While crews rejoiced at her escape scot free.
She raided soon some towns along the coast,
To get supplies and coal, the rebel ship
To Theodosia steam'd away, at length
To Russian boats torpedo gave the slip.
The Turkish Kavak forts for action clear'd,

To guard the Bosphorus, closed water-way,
Receiving strict command to fire all guns
Upon suspicious craft without delay.
A kind physician, through Odessa known,
Was asked by mutineers to go on board
The Potemkin, to see a dying man,
And forty wounded men of rebel horde.
To this good Doctor's great surprise all these
Were injured sore in fight among the crew,
For mutiny great numbers had enroll'd,
But some demurr'd, so men attack'd these few.
Four boats torpedo start in hot pursuit
Of Potemkin, by "Officers" full mann'd,
To try and sink Flagship of Black Sea Fleet
Off Turkish coast, with all her rebel band.

79TH CANTO.

The Polish papers state an order came
That officers from Warsaw should depart
For seat of war—as units chosen sole—
Without their regiments they refused to start.
Court Martial order'd all to be shot down,
The Lithuanian regiment would not fire,
The Cossacks with great verve perform'd the task,
As lust for ruthless deeds doth rage inspire.
In field behind the town was act enforced,
When savage troops return'd to Barrack life,
The Lithuanians these attack'd in force,
Two hundred slew amid the deadly strife.

In army Russ sedition now is rife,
The Poles and Jews are mutinous all round,
When sent as scouts no duty will perform,
Without a shot surrender, whene'er found.
In vast Manchurian force the rousing fact
Was news of Baltic Fleet's disastrous fate,
Like wild-fire spread momentous statement grave,
With Black Sea Mutiny, pronounced so great.
The Officers quite heedless have become,
Dislike for work the men do not conceal
In this unpopular, prolong'd campaign,
So now display scarce any martial zeal.
The Japanese advance some miles each day,
And new positions constantly maintain,
Calm work, deliberate, and well conceived
For conquest, that Oyama's plans may gain.
One million men, or near, are in the field,
The enemy can count on poorest chance
Of triumph o'er Mikado's valiant host,
So Linievich delays his troops' advance.
The correspondents aptly now refer
To splendid work perform'd by General Staff,
And war-department housed in Tokio,
Who zeal display, adopt no measures half.
For every man put out of action quite,
And every bullet in Manchuria spent,
Have been replaced at once without demur,
For ardour great swift wings to duty lent.

Saghalien hath been seized by Togo's Fleet;
This long bleak Isle belong'd in days gone by

To Dai Nippon, was wrenched from Island Power
By Russia vast, whose coast-line near doth lie.
The warships Japanese first clear'd the mines
From waters round, e'er troops essay'd to land
Off Korsakvosk, which town the Russians burnt,
Retreating inland, with small force in hand.
This offer'd some resistance further north,
But was dislodged, and follow'd in pursuit,
Four guns were captured, ammunition too,
More fighting ne'er ensued on line of route.
In dark dense fog the fleet had left its base,
And reached Saghalien Isle by dawn of day,
Torpedo-boat flotilla near'd the shore,
To clear all obstacles from waterway.
The war-ships landed troops without a pause,
A village quite defenceless then was found,
And cruiser "Novic" stranded on a reef,
A helpless wreck submerged, and fast aground.
Torpedo-boat flotilla steam'd away,
And fired on Korsakvosk, as daylight fell,
The Russians made response with harmless shells,
Destroy'd their fort, their jetty too as well.
A magazine, 'neath shadow of the walls,
Exploding with a loud resounding crash,
Hurl'd rocky masses o'er the sea afar,
Which then to fury wild did waters lash.
As Japanese next climb'd the hilly ground
In thousands, all in khaki colour clad,
Beneath, main streets of city they beheld,
The Russians panic-stricken, seem'd half mad.
A strong north-eastern wind had fann'd the fire,

Which started from the jetty all ablaze,
Through blood-red clouds of scorching smoke and
 flame
Was ruin'd city seen, in blinding haze.
Saghalien Isle hath now been fairly won,
The gallant Togo's projects rarely fail ;
The Japanese rename the towns, and bays,
The " Sun Flag " proudly waves o'er hill, and dale.

80TH CANTO.

Saghalien Army sends some details new—
The Russian force had made determin'd stand
At fortified position with some guns ;
To be at length repulsed by foes at hand,
But only after struggle most severe.
The fight took place in forest wild, and dense ;
A Naval Officer with men and guns
Were seized, to bold invaders' joy intense.
'Tis stated that the town of Korsakvosk
Completely drench'd with kerosine was found,
All buildings were destroy'd by three days' fire,
The city now is razed to very ground.
Surrender, or starvation seems the choice
Of Russian troops, with no cohesion great ;
Excepting Cossacks, most are Volunteers,
Escape by sea alone can ward off fate.
Saghalien's southern half Invaders hold.
Six hundred miles this Island runs in length,
The Russian force holds out in northern part,

So warships cruise around in goodly strength.
An army Japanese hath landed north
Of Vladivostock Port at recent date,
Complete envelopment will soon take place
Of Fortress prized, to Russia's peril great.
Her mighty force hath been bewildered quite,
For main resistance had been well prepared
On Tumen river ; *now* from land and sea
Attack on Eastern Port will not be spared.
The Russians cannot now resist advance
Which threatens here their Tumen strong-hold vast,
Siberian Coast hath been the landing point,
On "sacred soil " invaders stand at last !
In wild Saghalien Isle thick fogs prevail,
The streams are swollen, through the frequent rains,
At morn and eve the air is raw and cold,
Dense forest growth impedes this new campaign.
North-end of Island, river " Amur " stands,
Some warships Japanese cruise near its mouth,
In Russian Province Maritime of East,
Saghalien men fled terror-stricken south.
The Tsar's bold Admiral now sends report
Of his defeat in sea-fight off Japan,
The inefficient state of fleet throughout
He deems the cause, from time the cruise began.
Not only bad construction, due to haste,
Dishonest builders strove for utmost gain,
The experts were corrupt in passing ships
As *good*, to first-class rank did none attain.
The armour-plating proved but half as thick
As in official figures yet on view,

The quality was poor, so thus the shells
Of Japanese could pierce the vessels through.
No telemeters, too, were found on board
Of any ship, which interfered indeed
With good efficient aim of every crew,
So ne'er in marksmanship could they succeed.
The shells were bad, two-thirds did not explode,
Sufficient coal the vessels could not hold,
Not one could e'er attain her reckon'd speed,
With poor mechanic force were ships controll'd.
The engines, boilers too, required repair
Too often far, throughout this ill-starr'd fleet,
Two-thirds of all the crews were quite unfit,
Could not perform their work, or dangers meet.
The gunners did not know first principles
Of art, so notwithstanding practice great,
The Squadron sail'd to meet assured defeat ;
These points were mark'd in fleet arriving late.†
At Madagascar mutiny broke out,
When fourteen sailors then were promptly shot,
The guns of Rojdestvensky's ships were train'd
On vessels mutinous, to mar the plot.
This stay'd the hand awhile of mutineers,
Who had decided on revolt complete,
To make surrender full to gallant foe ;
Rebellious spirit ran throughout the fleet.
And during battle in Japan's wide sea,
Some vessels took no part at all in fight,
The Orders did not try to carry out,
Until torpedo-boats appear'd in sight,

† Admiral Nebogatoff's.

For these the Admiral had sent to tell
The mutineers, that, "if they still refused
To execute manœuvres he had plann'd,
Sink them he would, if orders they abused."

81ST CANTO.

Some Russians settled on Saghalien Isle,
And soon to ownership put in a claim;
In time, Mikado ceded this bleak land,
Which gain'd as Convict Settlement a name.
Late fighting through Saghalien forests wild,
Where Russians were entrenched, was most severe;
These held position strong with six field guns,
Withstanding cannonade from foemen near.
As night approach'd, 'neath cover spread by trees,
Through whiz of bullets, crack of rifles too,
In three battalions Japanese advanced,
In ruled formation swift with ardour flew,
They fired a thousand shells without effect,
With storm of shrapnel swept the trees; at length,
In hour of dawn, first trench was seized, and held,
As gallant troops advanced in fullest strength.
Next day the second trench was carried too,
The Japanese o'er-took retreating force,
And captured all the guns, with stores immense,
The Russians bravely fought with full resource.
Most weird was this exciting woodland scene,
The flash of rifles, bursting shells around,
Which set ablaze the undergrowth so dense,
Bespoke advance of troops through forest ground.

Saghalien's eastern coast hath now been seized,
A fleet bombardment met with great success ;
Some ammunition stores immense were found
At posts detach'd, defended more or less.
Near Mawka, Japanese were much surprised,
Their countrymen outnumber'd far their foe,
For fishermen adventurous dwell there,
Who, spite of war, their nets and lines still throw.
Some Russian steamers waited off the coast,
But warships Japanese appeared in sight,
So soldiers Russ the mainland could not gain,
Their arms gave up without once showing fight.
Torpedo boats of gallant Togo's fleet
Adventured forth one misty, rainy day,
Steam'd close in shore near Vladivostock Port,
And landed forces close to Possiet Bay.
Saghalien conquest still proceeds apace,
The Island Capital hath now been won,
Head Quarters too, for chief official work,
The town is quite intact, no damage done.
Strategic points the Japanese now hold,
The Russian Volunteers a post maintain,
These all are convicts, who may show some fight
In northern part, which foes have still to gain.
To cope with remnant left of Russian troops,
The Japanese will leave a force behind,
Main Army will proceed to Amur mouth,
Where light-house hath been seized, so work may
find.
From present date, some thirty years ago,
Saghalien Isle was ceded in exchange

For Kurile Islands, prized by Japanese,
The former stood in non-strategic range.
The scheme was alter'd since for home defence ;
As Ocean Mistress Dai Nippon holds now
Saghalien Isle, with most tenacious grasp,
To this politic move the Tsar must bow.
Soon after cession, causing great dismay
Throughout Mikado's Realm, this Isle was made
A Penal Settlement by Russian Tsar,
To protest strong attention ne'er was paid.
Five thousand convicts there are guarded well,
For next great move on chess-board watch, and
wait,

They cannot colonise this sterile land,
For soil and climate bar kind boon of fate.
'Tis said, no further fighting will ensue
In captured Isle ; the coast off Castries Bay,
At Amur mouth, receives attention now,
The great Strategic point of some near day.
Unlearned Russian Captives in Japan
Are taught to read and write in school each day,
In well-loved Russian tongue, that they may
speak

To cherish'd friends at home—so far away—
In four months' time these prisoners can read,
And also write their name with effort great ;
The Poles and Jews attend their own fine class,
Four hours a day, their zeal doth ne'er abate.

82nd CANTO.

PEACE NEGOTIATIONS.

The "Peace Proposals" now engross the world :
Japan and Russia, on Columbian soil,
The bark of destiny will guide to Port,
And men of mark will steer with anxious toil.
The issue wide at stake is *peace or war*,
The mighty Realm of Russia stands at bay,
Defeat upon defeat it hath sustain'd,
Quite unredeem'd by one victorious ray.
A *lasting peace* is now Japan's great wish,
Which she on her own terms must rightly gain,
By guarantees assured in all good faith,
And compensation too she should attain.
Most Nations hold Japan in high esteem,
Her probity shines bright as her Sun Flag,
Bad faith of Russia quite proverbial seems,
So lasting peace with halting steps may lag.
Japan stands firm and will not now be trick'd,
By diplomatic methods known so well,
She will not throw away on "table green"
Reward for battles, won through war's dread spell.

The Japanese are now prepared to land
At mouth of River Amur in full force.
(From light-house, Castries Bay, some eighty
leagues)
A fine strategic point is river course.

It's ancient forts were built in days gone by,
To daunt the pirates, who were bold and free,
Old guns repulsed this great marauding horde,
Who ravaged all the coast of eastern sea.
Since outbreak sad of this lamented war
Some modern guns were intermix'd with old,
The garrisons were largely too increased,
The fishermen as Volunteers enroll'd.
Continued grave defeat of Russian arms
To population causes great dismay,
These think, if Vladivostock should be seized,
Their foes would hold the district 'neath their
 sway.

For stirring great events the time hath come,
If Amur forts, bombardment soon should meet,
The fate of Eastern Fortress rests assured,
The Golden Horn would lie at foemen's feet.
Report comes in that heavy rains, with flood,
In north Corea recently prevail'd,
At Tumen River Camp destruction wrought,
To save their pontoon bridges Russians fail'd.
In days just past, detachment Japanese
From Ky-ong-yong clear'd out a Russian force,
Some Chinese spies announced its swift retreat
Without the guns, which menaced forward course.
Some shells were fired at once by Japanese,
Dismounted Russian guns appear'd in sight,
With batteries gallant Islanders advanced
In force, prepared for great artillery fight.
On hilly range were posted eight huge guns,
No slightest trace of gunners could be seen,

It was assumed that they in trenches lay,
So Japanese advanced with ardour keen.
They soon discover'd some Corean carts,
With dummy guns of pine wood, painted black ;
By wooden guns the Russians long deceived
The Natives, whose discernment seemed o'er-slack.
Six hundred thousand Russian troops are now
'Neath Linievich in long strategic line,
The gaps are fill'd, oft made by fell disease,
To strengthen threaten'd points must force combine.
In north Corea now the Russians count
Some sixty thousand men ; to check advance
Of wily foe they make defensive works,
Which may ensure delay by lucky chance.
Field-pieces number full eight hundred now,
From Russia strength in guns augments each day.
But roads are quite impassable through floods,
The heavy rains impede gun-carriage way.
Main Army Russ is concentrated still
From Pahmen-cheng to Chang-chung line o'er
long,
And Linievich more active seems than foe,
Who waits upon events reliant, strong.
In conquer'd Isle sharp fighting hath ensued
Once more, o'er sixty Officers and men
A full surrender made to Japanese,
To Dai Nippon, by sea, proceeded then.

83RD CANTO.

The Peace Negotiations still proceed ;
But Russia fails to grasp momentous fact
Of her position after grave defeat,
Remains still arrogant in pose and act.
The first three articles are duly sign'd
Of Dai Nippon's note-worthy terms of Peace :
A firm " Protectorate " o'er Hermit Realm
From Russian greed will fully give release.
The Japanese will never more permit
Full independence of Corean State,
Nor slightest interference will allow
By any Foreign Power, small or great.
The Tsar's shrewd representatives had sought
To gain a promise from their valiant foe—
That she on coast no Fortress would construct,
To deal to Russian prestige grievous blow ;
But *this* the gallant Islanders refused,
On freedom absolute they would insist,
Corea close adjoins their native land,
So Japanese must do whate'er they list.
With Articles now sign'd will disappear .
The Tsar's " Concessions "—so notorious thought,
To Admiral Alexeieff and *clique*
Who hasten'd on the war, and riches sought.
'Tis said that Russia will accept but ten
Of all the twelve demands that she must face,
Ten stripes she gets, but will not those endure,
Which hurt her *amour propre*—imply disgrace.
†The leases will be held by Japanese,

† Of Port Arthur, Dalny, and other places.

The railroad main from Russian hands hath pass'd,
Manchurian State reverts to Chinese Realm ;
The questions " crucial " remain till last.
Japan will hold Saghalien Island still,
But Russia will not brook a Naval base,
Nor Islet fortified so near her coast,
But fishing rights will yield in ocean space
Four *vital questions* now must be discuss'd.
The fate of ships in Foreign ports intern'd,
The limit put to Russian Naval power ;
Scarce hope of settlement can be discern'd.
In length Japan is seven thousand miles,
Saghalien adds some seven hundred more,
The Kurile Islands range beyond in line,
To Russia these belong'd in days of yore.
Kamkatchka on the mainland Russ is close
To one of Kurile Islets most remote,
Famed Togo's fleet, 'tis said, will seize this point,
To Russian soil attention will devote.
The great Manchurian army Russ extends
Three hundred miles ; we know not yet the length
Of vast opposing force, which Russians say
Doth fâr exceed their own in *verve* and strength.
From Russian source ill-omen'd rumours come—
That Generals disagree in councils held ;
When troops arrive to fill depleted ranks,
To drastic force the Chief is oft compell'd.
Internal Russian troubles leave their mark,
Reservists join, and stir up endless strife,
So executions stamp a foul disgrace,
For disaffection through all ranks is rife.

A "tribute" Russia doth refuse to pay
To Dai Nippon, her great victorious foe;
The Autocrat will not admit defeat,
Though crush'd on land and sea by blow on blow.
Is peace to bless, or war to scourge mankind?
The hour approaches fraught with good, or ill,
Spell-bound the Nations wait with bated breath
The fitful Monarch's mis-directed will.
The Tsar of Russia gives the casting vote;
For weal or woe, his word is final now,
Men's lives by millions hang upon a thread,
To mandate poor humanity must bow.
That this decision Autocrat will make
On question's merit sole, is not believed,
Not Russian welfare, but dynastic need
Will fateful word induce, 'tis now perceived.
In Tsar but little confidence is felt,
For *change on change* his record hath been known
From first to last, through this disastrous war,
In statemanship no wisdom hath been shown.

84TH CANTO.

On western side of theatre of war
Kuroki, Notzu, Oku, Nogi lie,
These wait developments by eastern force,*
Who captured Amur mouth and forts thereby—
And other troops, who won Saghalien Isle,
Who now invade Siberian district too,

* Under Hasegawa, and Kawamura.

And may advance by road, or river wide,
But must surmount great obstacles in view.
A turning movement vast brave Nogi seeks,
And marches through Mongolian province great,
The same position Armies still retain
As heretofore, from right to left,—men state.
The Russian General once had plann'd attack
On broad Manchurian lands—which foes desired,—
But soon abandon'd this Quixotic scheme,
To offer challenge bold was not inspired.
All through this mighty contest, 'tis observed
That pauses long ensue, e'er actions great;
A task stupendous must accomplish'd be
Through every stage, e'er seeking day of fate.
Blockade of Vladivostock forts by sea
Is now assured, since loss of Naval sway;
The nearest force of Japanese on land
At Tumen lies, two hundred miles away.
This section men suppose, will help attack,
But most fatiguing march must first essay,
Must river passage force, with smaller streams,
To gain the northern land round Amur Bay.
Retreat of Russian troops and heavy rains
Postpone engagement now, that men await,
The mud is three feet deep on roads in front,
No force can move, till floods somewhat abate.
Mistchenko's cavalry remain as yet
On neutral soil, Mongolia's eastern land,
They try to turn their foemen's flank and rear,
With help of Chinchuses' pro-Russian band.
Near all the forests in Saghalien Isle,

So prized, have been burnt down since recent date ;
Great tracts of forest land were set on fire,
But who the culprits were no man can state,
A Russian General from the Isle arrived
In Tokio, where officers now learn
To read and speak the language Japanese,
And with enjoyment walk and drive in turn.
The health of captors, Russians often toast,
And no ill-feeling do they e'er display ;
A Captain Alechief hath the strongest wish
To make a home in Dai Nippon, and stay.
The Russian armies sorely need supplies ;
†At Korosoff was found an ample stock,
With steamers waiting, which have captured been,
Their foes hold river, so approaches block.
Notes Japanese have reach'd main army Russ
“ That now the Peace Proposals run full swing,
Hostilities are useless for a time,
As gladsome news some messenger may bring.
For over six long weeks a nervous strain
Throughout main army Russ hath now been felt,
For battle preparations have been made
In camp,—a basin form'd by woodland belt.

“ THE TSAR'S ENTOURAGE.”

The Tsar's French Doctor Landard breathed his last
In native land, thus ends his strange career,
From butcher's drudge to Palace Courtier turn'd
This Healer known to fame, both far and near.
Most marvellous are anecdotes now told

In Saghalien.

Of power he held to cure by touch or look ;
In early life he felt a strong desire
To study medicine by rule of book.
The Lyons school for lectures then he sought,
(His livelihood in town of France he gain'd)
But poverty and calling proved a bar,
With healing art so singular attain'd.
As chemist next he sought to earn a name,
To Tsar his healing powers were soon made known,
In Petersburg astounding cures were wrought,
Imperial patronage at length was shown.
The faculty of medicine declined
To give the valued medical degree,
Although the Tsar to Paris sent request ;
Professors thought the Doctor's views too free.

85TH CANTO.

The Peace Negotiations still proceed,
All thoughtful minds are poised 'twixt hope and
fear,
Men hope the best, and yet they dread the worst,
The crucial moment now approaches near.
'Tis evident that peace is much desired
By both opponents in this struggle vast :
Immortal glory Dai Nippon hath won
Throughout this bitter war from first to last.
Colossal Russia ardour ne'er display'd
For contest great, but now she would not shrink,
If struggle were renew'd by word of Tsar,

To forge in chain of warfare one more link.
A peace to compensate the Victor well,
On Vanquish'd, one that would not sorely press,
Is climax wish'd by all large-hearted men
With aspirations high—no object less,
In truth, the cost in blood and treasure so
Apalling seems, if struggle fierce should last,
*That mutual friends with utmost zeal now seek
O'er rugged path a golden bridge to cast.

“DEADLOCK.”

The dreaded hour hath come, the word is “war,”
The world aghast now trembles at the thought !
With harden'd heart the Tsar pronounces doom
On countless thousands, in fresh warfare sought.
Announcement comes that Russia will not pay
“Indemnity” *direct*, or *indirect*,
No territorial cession will she make ;
Arbitrament of arms she doth elect.
Mikado's terms an *ultimatum* stand,
From which his people firm will not recede ;
Unless the fitful Tsar will now give way,
No power on earth can struggle great impede.
The patriotic fervour so intense,
Which Japanese all feel, is now the same
As when this mighty contest first began,
That ardent spirit which leads on to fame.
The Island Empire now is firm resolved
That she will not conclude a peace, unless
The terms are adequate to compensate

* President Roosevelt and others.

For loss involved through bitter strain and stress.

She would prefer that war should recommence,
Than fruits of conquest she should now forego,
Her temperate and just demands are these
"Saghalien's Cession, also tribute low."

For splendid triumph both on sea and land
Her full reward she doubtless will obtain ;
She cannot e'er forget that Russia led
The Coalition *once*, that proved her bane.†
‡ 'Tis now the greatest glory of Japan
That during this great struggle—on the wane—
Her skill'd commanders work'd *for her alone*,
With single-hearted zeal—and not in vain—
Antithesis to service of her foe,
Where half-veil'd jealousy is often shown,
Recriminations, too, throughout command,
On battle-phase thus vivid light is thrown.

The Russian war-ships are refloated now,
Renamed as well, by skilful Japanese,
To Island Naval force adjunct will prove ;
As set off for "Indemnity" should please.
The Perseviet the Segaim now is named,
Poltava as the Tongo will be known,
The Palada as Tsugarm swells the list,
The Variag as Soya will be shown.
Of all commanders, in this needless war,

† Military Correspondent of the "Daily Telegraph."

‡ Obliging Japan to give up Port Arthur in 1895.

Undoubtedly famed Togo stands alone :
E'er this, Mikado's Navy was untried ;
In Chinese war it's foes were soon o'erthrown.
Beneath the *old* conditions or the *new*
The Japanese were aye a warlike race,
In time of bows and arrows were renown'd,
In fiercest combat foes would boldly face.
The Empire's splendid code of honour true
A fine religion in itself doth seem,
A military code, affecting all,
And which the Knightly Islanders esteem.
When gallant Dai Nippon threw gauntlet down
Before her faithless, vain, Colossal foe,
In resolute and most heroic vein—
Her friends all fear'd she might meet overthrow.
Some Statesmen Japanese made shrewd remarks
To Correspondents, ere the war began---
" We do not estimate vast Russia's strength
As others do, who have no chance to scan.
For our conclusions all are soundly based
On rotten system, quite corrupt throughout,
On discipline enforced through Empire wide,
By dungeon, exile, mines, and deadly knout.
We place reliance full on Island force ;
Long patient years of truly honest zeal
To most efficient state have brought all arms,
Combined with loyalty, which all men feel."

86TH CANTO.

"PEACE."

Mikado great, magnanimous, appears,
He will the whole "Indemnity" forego :
His noble attributes impress the world,
O'er phase of gloom a radiant light doth throw !
The Tsar's last word meant *war*, Mikado's *peace*,
Hence comes surprise, dramatic in extreme,
The Council, held in Tokio, decides
Against the people's wish, it now doth seem,
Who at decision indignation feel,
But tactful moderation won the day ;
At bar of judgment these two monarchs stand,
As impulse vain, or generous they obey.
The darkest hour comes aye before the dawn ;
All hope had fled at Envoys' meeting last,
Mikado, not the Tsar, had *final word*,
Which wrought amazement, as the war-cloud pass'd
His forces arm'd now bitter *chagrin* feel ;
The Island Empire bellicose remains ;
Peace-policy the "Elders" thought the best ;
No dubious path their statecraft ever stains.
*Now, after victory from end to end,
Unbroken triumphs marking conflict vast,
Renunciation by this Sovereign wise
Is *crowning conquest* shown to world at last.
To wreath of laurel olive branch he adds,
With further victories within his grasp,
With noble courage takes up views humane,

* Lord Redesdale in "The Times."

The dove of peace with ardour warm doth clasp.
 To all the Nations *thus* he hath proclaim'd
 The "Bushi" do not fight for sordid greed;
 The Island Empire puts forth all her strength
 For *home defence*, in peril's hour of need;
 Oft Sovereign Rulers epithets receive,
 "Victoria Good" is now a name well known;
 As time rolls on, Mikado's glorious reign
 As "Generous Mutsuhito's" may be shown.
 No beauteous arch, no flags the streets adorn,
 No festive scenes in Tokio appear,
 To mark the end of this *triumphant war*,
 But brooding silence reigns both far and near.
 And yet for all she fought Japan hath won;
 The Treaty with Great Britain now is sign'd;
 And commerce will advance with bounding stride;
 To edict wise must people be resign'd.
 †Through disappointment, caused by terms of peace,
 Grave riots in Japan have taken place,
 In Capital was Martial-law proclaim'd:
 The cloud hath pass'd, and calm doth storm efface.
 Internal state of Russia quite appals,
 For fire and sword the Caucasus enfold,
 Her thousands slain in racial contest grim,‡
 Of greater horrors hath no record told.§
 All thinking men now deem high meed of praise
 To Fair Columbia's President is due,||

† A later report.

‡ Between Tartars and Armenians.

§ Mutilated children thrown to dogs, and men roasted alive.

|| President Roosevelt and others.

He help'd to stay this awful conflict vast,
With zeal a peaceful compact sought in lieu.
May God's great gift of *Peace*, so highly prized,
Descend on earth and give the Nations rest ;
May monarchs kneel before the Throne of Grace,
By noble aspirations be possess'd !

Renewed Treaty of Alliance between Great Britain and
Japan. (Ratified 12th August, 1905.)

An Anglo-Japanese Alliance *new*
Hath now been sign'd and seal'd, of import great,
Far-reaching in its aim, of priceless worth,
For war's dread influence may now abate.
The British Nation feels with one accord
Great satisfaction at accomplish'd fact,
All people deem this step in statecraft wise ;
Discrete are Nippon's sons in word and act.
Allies both think this Treaty will prevent
A "Coalition" in the coming years,
That Gate of Janus may be firmly closed,
The East exempt from oft recurring fears :
Attack upon Great Britain or Japan
In Eastern sphere, on either sea or land,
Will be regarded as attack on *both*,
And be repulsed by forces hand-in-hand.
May bond of friendship still be closer drawn,
And valued "Treaty" last through Times' long span,
May force united stay aggressive might,
Give *Peace* in regions far, and joy to man !



